Truth about the Crucifixion

Transcripts from the International Conference on Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross held at the COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE Kensington High Street, Kensington, London W8 on 2nd, 3rd and 4th June 1978

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Publisher's Note

Jesus, peace be upon him, holds great importance in three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Yet throughout the ages various mysteries, theories and claims have been associated with his personage.

In 1978, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community held a conference to eradicate any misrepresentation regarding Jesus. The conference was held in London under the auspices of Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad[rh], the third successor of the Promised Messiah[as], under the title of *The International Conference on the Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross*. Various well-known scholars presented their research about the life of Jesus with a special focus on his ministry, crucifixion, his survival from the cross, his migration to the East, and his resting place. The transcripts of this great conference were first published in the very same year. Now under the auspices of Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (May Allah be his Helper), the fifth successor of the Promised Messiah[as], this book is being reprinted.

This reprint also includes a bibliography, index, and some pictures for a better understanding of the readers.

There were many who offered invaluable services to successfully bring this work to completion, amongst whom were respected Omair Aleem Sahib (In-charge *Makhzan-e-Tasaweer*), respected Usama Karim Sahib (*Murabbi Silsila*, *Makhzan-e-Tasaweer*) and respected Faiez Ahmad Saleem Sahib of Germany. Adeel Teyeeb Sahib of Additional *Wakalat-e-Ishaat* worked on the setting, formatting, bibliography, and index generation of this book. May Allah the Almighty abundantly reward everyone who participated in this work. Ameen!

Naseer Ahmad Qamar
Additional *Wakeel-ul-Ishaat*
June 2023

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Forward

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian had his attention drawn by God to the verity that though Jesus, peace be on him, had been nailed to the cross, God Almighty had delivered him from death upon the cross, which was deemed accursed by virtue of the pronouncement in verse 23, chapter 21 of Deuteronomy; and that after the event of the Crucifixion Jesus departed from Judea in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel and eventually died a natural death in Kashmir. He was also able to specify the tomb of Jesus in Kashmir. He set out these matters in detail in his well-known book 'Jesus in India'.

His announcement that Jesus had not died on the cross met with bitter opposition both from the main body of Muslims and the Christians. The Orthodox Muslim divines condemned him as an unbeliever outside the pale of Islam, because of his exposition that though Jesus had been nailed to the Cross, he had not died on the cross.

This announcement also amounted to a refutation of a fundamental Christian doctrine and the Christians also, therefore, became bitterly hostile to him. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib was also divinely informed that God Almighty would progressively bring to light historical evidence which would establish beyond doubt that the verity concerning the death and tomb of Jesus which had been disclosed to and publicised by him was irrefutable and was a manifestation of divine purpose.

In order to draw the attention of the West strikingly to this unique research of the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement,

the Ahmadiyya Community in the United Kingdom organised an International Conference with the permission and under the guidance and direction of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement. The Conference was held in London on 2nd, 3rd and 4th June of this year and roused tremendous interest in religious circles, not only in the United Kingdom but around the globe. It received great publicity through every type of media so that it can be stated with confidence that millions of people in the West have come to know of this unique research of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him and that keen interest in it has been roused among Western scholars. The British Council of Churches has shown interest in it. Several high dignitaries of the Church have given expression to their views concerning it.

The organisers of the Conference did not have in mind to bring any religion or religious doctrine into contempt in the least. Their only purpose has been to proclaim the truth as widely as possible, and to clear a righteous prophet of God of the calumny of having suffered an accursed death which has persisted through nearly two thousand years and to re-establish his complete innocence.

This volume presents a complete verbatim record of all that was said at the Conference. The responsibility for whatever was stated at the Conference rests upon the respective speakers. The organisers of the Conference do not necessarily agree with everything said at the Conference. There has been no attempt at editing any of the statements.

London: B. A. Rafiq
September, 1978

Address of Welcome by B. A. Rafiq

(The International Conference on the Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross commenced with a recitation of a passage from the Holy Quran)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

MAY I welcome you all to this *International Conference on The Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross*. The sole purpose of the Conference is to arrive at the truth so that our faith in it may be enhanced. That truth concerns Jesus Christ, on whom be the peace of God, and in particular centres around his death.

The Jews claimed that they had compassed the death of Jesus on the cross, and that, therefore, he had become accursed in accordance with the pronouncement contained in Deuteronomy, Chapter 21 verse 23:

> "...and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God."

Thus the Jewish Encyclopaedia states :

> "The very form of his punishment would disprove those claims in Jewish eyes. No Messiah that Jews could recognise could suffer such a death; an insult to God." (Targum Rashi)

Similarly, Hans Joachim Schoeps in his book " The Jewish Christian Argument " remarks:

> "If God could not look on in anguish while Abraham sacrificed his son, would he then have suffered his own son to be killed, without destroying the entire world?"

The position of the Orthodox Church, developed over a period,

came to be that Jesus was not only the son of God but was God the Son, i.e. the second person of the trinity, and that he suffered death upon the cross to atone for the sins of mankind. They believe that he rose up from the dead on the third day following his crucifixion and went about in his physical body to meet his disciples and then ascended to heaven in the same physical body.

These two opposing views have attracted a series of conjectures in respect of the birth, ministry, death, resuscitation, ascension and the second coming of Jesus. With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, added interest in the Holy Shroud of Turin, and a better understanding of death in its revised medical definition, have collectively helped in lifting the shroud of mystery which has cloaked the true Jesus over a period of close upon two thousand years.

The Muslims believe in the Holy Quran as the revealed word of God Almighty, which has withstood the constant buffeting of new and historical discoveries and yet they have always found that its presentation of facts is clear and unambiguous. The Holy Quran affirms that Jesus was born without a father and that he was a prophet of God, who was a recipient of divine revelation. He was put on the cross but was miraculously taken down before life became extinct. The Founder of our Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was able to present tangible evidence to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that he was ministered unto and was resuscitated and after meeting his disciples in his physical body, he departed to carry his message, as he had desired, to the lost tribes of Israel, and eventually died at a ripe old age on a pleasant plateau with springs of running water as indicated in the Holy Quran. Thus to a Muslim, Jesus did not die an accursed death on the cross because it is not the practice of God Almighty to allow

His chosen prophets to become the victims of an accursed death at the hands of those who do not believe in them. The Holy Quran was revealed some six centuries after the crucifixion of Jesus and it clearly stated that the Jews failed to kill him. Thus six centuries later, the mystery and conjectures regarding Jesus were firmly corrected in the revealed word of God Almighty.

That truth is being brought to you once again so that you may judge for yourselves. Our International panel of speakers is not here to conduct a post-mortem on the Church and the Cross, but to present facts and their view of those facts to help you reach the truth.

After this brief exposition of the purpose of the Conference, I wish to express our deepest gratitude to the Head of the Movement, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih III, who most graciously granted us his permission to hold this Conference. He has been a source of inspiration and guidance to the organisers and agreed to bless the Conference with his holy presence and to address those present at the final session of the Conference on Sunday. On behalf of the London Mosque, I extend a hearty welcome to the entourage accompanying Huzur on this occasion.

Born in 1909, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad was elected in 1965 the third Khalifa of the Promised Messiah, whose grandson he is. He completed his early studies in this country prior to taking up a post at the Movement's Headquarters at Rabwah. He has travelled to several countries and this is his fifth visit to this country since he became the Head of the Movement.

Next, I would like to thank our panel of speakers at the Conference who have come from all over the world to this country to address us over the next two days. This shows the active interest they

have taken in truth and in this subject and I am confident that the audience will leave this Conference thoroughly inspired by their research.

We have received the text of an address from:
Professor F. M. Hassnain - a famous historian and head of the Department of Archaeology at Srinagar, India.

We have among us:
Dr. A. Faber-Kaiser - a Spanish scholar of Comparative Religion.

Mr. M. M. Ahmad - a former Minister of Finance and Economic Development in the Pakistan Government and now at the World Bank in the USA who has been actively engaged in private research about the diaspora of Israel.

Mr. A. Salam Madsen - from Denmark, who has translated the Holy Quran into Danish.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir - a famous orientalist from Pakistan who is a student of Comparative Religion.

Dr. Ladislav Filip - from Czechoslovakia, who has done a lot of research on the life of Jesus.

Mr. R. C. E. Scholfield from Britain.

People from all walks of life from all over the world have come to this First International Conference on the Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross. Thus we have delegates from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Fiji, Ghana, Nigeria, Mauritius, all over Europe, and from the United States of America. To them all, on behalf of the local Ahmadiyya Community, I extend a hearty welcome.

Finally, I wish to introduce to you your chairman of the first session. Hazrat Muhammad Zafrulla Khan. He became Foreign Minister

of Pakistan in its formative years in 1947 and for many years led the Pakistan delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations. He was President of the 17th Session of the General Assembly and served two terms as Judge of the International Court of Justice at the Hague, of which he was Vice-President from 1958-1961 and then its President from 1970-1973. Now retired, he has written several books and has translated the Holy Quran and the *Riyadhus Salihin*, a book of traditions and sayings of the Holy Prophet, besides several writings of the Promised Messiah into English. His latest work is: Deliverance from the Cross.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I call upon Hazrat Chaudhry Sahib to inaugurate this Conference.

Opening Address by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan

WHILE it was expected that a study of the question whether Jesus Christ did or did not die on the cross would arouse widespread interest, some people are unable to appreciate why this question should be of such serious concern to the Muslims that the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam should have promoted the holding of this Conference on this question. Unfortunately it is not yet sufficiently recognised in the West that Islam is the culmination of the Judea-Christian revelation and that the life and death of Jesus are of as vital concern to Muslims, particularly the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement, as they are to Jews and Christians.

The Holy Quran, the Scripture of Islam, requires faith in Jesus as a righteous prophet of God in the Dispensation of Moses, and as the Messiah whose advent had been prophesied in the Jewish Scriptures. The Jews believe that Jesus died on the cross and thus became accursed according to the pronouncement in Deuteronomy, 21:23, and that, therefore, he was not either a true prophet or the Messiah. The Christians, fairly early, developed the doctrine that Jesus had died on the cross and had become accursed as an atonement for the sins of mankind and to lead it to salvation. The Quran emphatically repudiates both these notions.

It affirms clearly that Jesus was, through Divine mercy and grace, delivered from death on the cross. He was taken down from the cross in a state of coma and was ministered unto and was

resuscitated and carried his message to the dispersed tribes of Israel. The Quran further affirms that God provided shelter and security for Jesus "*on a pleasant plateau with springs of running water*" (al-Mu'minun, 23:51). The Holy Prophet of Islam is reported as having said that Jesus lived to an honoured old age exceeding one hundred and twenty years.

The mass of orthodox Muslims, being influenced in later centuries by the Christian tradition, adopted the utterly untenable notion that Jesus was taken up bodily into heaven before being placed upon the cross. This is a direct contradiction of the Quran. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, revived faith in the Quranic version of the delivery of Jesus from the cross and his ultimate natural death at a ripe old age. In the nineties of the last century, he announced that after the event of the crucifixion, Jesus travelled through the countries of the diaspora, preaching to the scattered tribes of Israel and finally settled in Kashmir among the Israelis of that region and died and was buried in Srinagar, where his tomb may be visited freely.

He further affirmed that now that God had disclosed this aspect of the post crucifixion life of Jesus to him, He, in His wisdom, would cause to appear progressively historical proofs in support of this verity.

There are prophecies both in Christianity and in Islam concerning the second advent of Jesus in the latter days. These prophecies have been treated as lending support to the notion that Jesus was taken bodily up to heaven and would descend in his physical body to the earth in the latter days. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement pointed out that all prophecies concerning the second coming of a spiritually exalted personage signify the advent of

someone in the power and spirit of that personage. This was made clear by Jesus himself. His disciples asked him, saying, "Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" And Jesus answered and said unto them, "Elias truly shall first come, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed ...." Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist. (Matt. 17:10-13). He said: "If you will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come" (Matt. 11: 14). "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke 1:17). The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement claimed that he had come in the power and spirit of Jesus and that in his advent were fulfilled the prophecies concerning the second coming of Jesus. Now, should it be true that Jesus died upon the cross, was resurected and taken bodily up to heaven and his descent upon the earth in his physical body is to be looked forward to in these days, there would be no room for anyone else to appear in his power and spirit in fulfilment of the prophecies concerning his second coming. All these questions, the death, resurrection, ascension and second coming of Jesus are, therefore, of vital interest for Muslims, more particularly for the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Thus, whether Jesus did or did not die on the cross is a question in which the Jews, Christians and Muslims are alike keenly interested for the sake of arriving at the Truth. It is in this spirit of seeking for and making manifest the Truth that the Ahmadiyya Movement has, as an act of service to mankind, organised this Conference.

To us it is intolerable that a loved one of God, in whom we believe as a righteous Prophet, should be accounted as having died an accursed death. Such a notion amounts to a denial of God's mercy and grace. To clear Jesus of this calumny and to wipe out this stain upon his honour is the purpose of this Conference.

Address of Welcome to Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh] by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan

We are most fortunate in having with us today Hazrat Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad Sahib, grandson of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, the Promised Messiah, and his Third Successor, and thus, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, may Allah be pleased to support him and strengthen him with His mighty help. He has undertaken this journey from Pakistan to the United Kingdom for the purpose of participation in this International Conference which he will presently address.

Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad Sahib was elected to his exalted office in November 1965 on the death of his revered father, the late Hazrat Sahibzada Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad Sahib, the Second Successor of the Promised Messiah.

He combines in his person the best of the East and the West. At an early age, under the direction of his revered father, he committed the whole of the Holy Quran to memory and, is on that account, designated Hafiz. His academic qualifications include High Proficiency in Oriental Learning, graduation in philosophy and economics from Government College Lahore, an affiliate of the Punjab University, and an Honours degree from Balliol College, Oxford. I venture to submit that it would be difficult to discover another individual in contemporary society who combines in his person these high achievements.

After the completion of his courses of study at home and abroad,

he served for a number of years as Principal of the Theological Academy at the headquarters of the Movement, and later, for a much longer period, as Principal of the Talimul Islam College which, under his wise and devoted guidance, became one of the principal educational institutions of the country.

He also served for some years simultaneously as President of the Central Association of the Movement.

Thus, by 1965, at the age of 56, he occupied so distinguished a position on the basis of his qualifications, experience, service and his multi-faceted and gracious personality, that his almost unanimous election to the exalted office of Khalifatul Masih, occasioned no surprise to anyone.

During the period of his Khilafat, the Movement has continued to advance from triumph to triumph in the face of bigotry, misrepresentation, misunderstanding and severe persecution which, in the wisdom of God Almighty, have always been the portion of the righteous in all ages and climes.

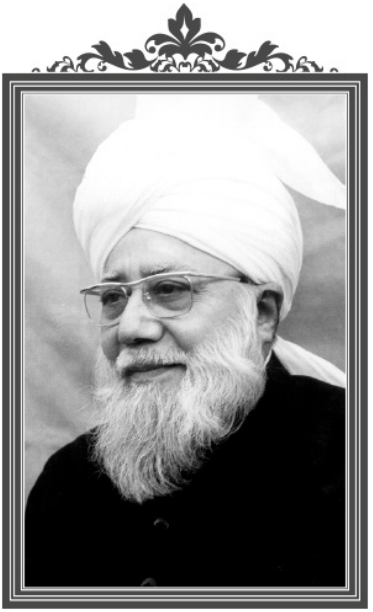
Every beneficent activity of the Movement has been intensified under the wise direction and helpful guidance of the Khalifatul Masih. A number of new centres of the Movement have been established in different regions of the world. Several hospitals, clinics, schools and institutions of higher education have been opened, particularly in certain countries of West Africa.

The Holy Quran has been translated into several European, Asian and African languages. The message of Islam is thus being conveyed to the ends of the earth.

If one were to select a single one out of his many gracious qualities for special mention, it would be his all-embracing love for the whole of humanity, both as individuals and groups. No one who

has been so fortunate as to come into personal contact with him has departed without carrying away a memory of his gracious smile and the fragrance of his personal love and affection for one and all.

Ladies and Gentlemen!
I shall no longer stand between you and our beloved Leader, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III.



Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad Khalifatul Masih III[rh]

Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad[rh] is the third successor of the Promised Messiah[as]. He was born in Qadian, India, in November 1909 and was elected Khalifatul Masih III in November 1965.

At a very early age he memorised the whole of the Holy Quran. He took a degree with honours in Arabic, at the University of the Punjab. He then graduated in Philosophy and Arabic from Government College, Lahore. He pursued his studies at Balliol College, Oxford, where he took an honours degree. He speaks a number of languages.

In 1944, he became Principal of the Talim-ul-Islam College,

Rabwah, Pakistan, an office which he held until his election as Khalifatul Masih III.

Under his direction a large number of schools, medical centres, hospitals, newspapers and magazines have been established, mostly in African countries. He has brought about a great expansion in the missionary activities of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The institutions established by him include the Fazl-e-Umar Foundation, the Nusrat Jehan Leap Forward Programme and the Ahmadiyya Centenary Jubilee Fund.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III is a keen apiarist and rose grower. He also maintains a stable of valuable horses.

Response by
Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

We praise Him and call down blessings on His noble Messenger and on His servant, the Promised Messiah[as]. All worthiness of perfect Praise belongs to Allah alone Who is One and Peerless.

The scope of this conference is very wide and it has many ramifications. You have heard several expositions of the main problem from diverse angles. I shall confine myself to drawing your attention to some fundamental considerations that should enable you to view the whole matter in its proper perspective, and to arrive at the right conclusion.

The Unity of God is the basic reality of the universe. God is One and has no associate. Nothing and no one is like unto Him. He is Unique in His being and His attributes. No being is like unto His being, nor are the qualities of anything like unto His attributes. In His being, as well as in His attributes, He is Eternal and Ever Existing and Unchangeable. His knowledge encompasses all that is manifest and all that is hidden. He knows the overt and the covert of everything. His knowledge is inherent in Him and is not bestowed by, or derived from, any teacher, and is without limit; while the knowledge of man requires a teacher and is limited.

God is One and without associate. He has no son and no consort. He manifests Himself to His righteous servants in visions, but He has neither shape nor form.

God possesses all perfect attributes and manifests all praiseworthy

qualities. He is the Source of all good and comprehends all Power. He is the Creator of everything and is the Master of all. All grace proceeds from Him and He determines everything. He has a personal relationship with everything. All life is derived from Him and is maintained by Him. He possesses every perfection and is free from every defect, default and weakness. He alone is worthy of worship by all who are on the earth and in heaven.

Man cannot determine the purpose of his life on his own, inasmuch as he did not come into this world of his own will, nor will he depart from it by his own choice. He Who has created man can alone inform him of the purpose for which he has been created. He has revealed in the Holy Quran:

> "I have created men, high and low, that they may worship Me." (adh-Dhariyat, 51:57)

Man has been called upon to worship God not by compulsion but of his own volition. To enable him to do so God has bestowed upon him two basic faculties. One, he has been bestowed the faculty whereby he can suppress his low desires and safeguard himself against sin. Secondly, he has been bestowed the faculty whereby he can arrive at a stage in the love of God Almighty, in which he wholly forgets all that is beside God. For the direction of these two faculties God has provided man with heavenly guidance and law.

The Christians subscribe to the doctrine that God so loved the world that, to bestow salvation upon man, He placed the burden of the sins of the whole of mankind upon His son Jesus, and made him accursed by bringing about his death upon the cross. According to some, Jesus passed three days and three nights in hell, as atonement for the sins of mankind, and was then restored to life, and thus provided the means of salvation for those who

might believe in him. In this way the supposed conflict between the Divine attribute of Justice, which demanded punishment, and the Divine attribute of Mercy, which demanded forgiveness, was resolved.

Islam considers that this design offends against reason, and is unacceptable from every point of view. Looked at from the point of view of justice, it is clearly unjust that an innocent one should be punished for the sins of the guilty. From the point of view of spiritual philosophy, sin means rebellion against God and His commandments and thus becoming bereft of His love. How can man win through to the obedience and love of God, by depriving God, the son, of the obedience and love of God, the Father?

Islam teaches that in order to find God, it is necessary for a person to discard all vice, and this can be achieved only through such recognition of God Almighty as fills the heart with the realisation of God's Majesty and Greatness, and instils His fear in the human soul. To win the love of God it is necessary to love Him to a degree that entails losing oneself altogether in Him, and gaining a new and pure life from Him.

As the highest excellence of man is the winning of Divine love, which is testified to by the witness of millions of the righteous, it follows that the true purpose of human life is the winning of God's love and nearness to Him. Islam teaches that perfect recognition of God is the root of fear, and love, and appreciation of Him. He who is bestowed perfect recognition, is also bestowed perfect fear and perfect love.

Man's true love of God attracts the love of God and the true lover of God, who is wholly devoted to God, in turn becomes the beloved of God. Such true and perfect love cannot subsist along with the wrath of God and the fire of hell. One of the signs

of such perfect love is that such a lover deems the disobedience of his Beloved, and His displeasure, a poison, and is all the time apprehensive lest, in consequence of any sin or disobedience on his part, his Beloved should cut asunder from him.

Thus he who is bestowed perfect fear and perfect love is safeguarded against all sin, inasmuch as sin proceeds from fearlessness or daring. This is true salvation, and for such salvation we do not stand in need of any blood or any crucifixion, nor do we need any atonement. All that we need is the sacrifice of the ego. This demands that the nurture and development of our natural faculties, should be carried out under the guidance of the One True God, Who is also the Creator of our nature.

God is the source of all beauty and all light. His benevolence is so vast that His favours and bounties are without number. Such beauty and benevolence impress upon every heart the truth that all perfect delight is to be found in God, and that to be cast away from Him is ruinous hell. Thus it is an impossibility that true recognition and disobedience should find room in a human heart at the same time.

Salvation does not mean merely deliverance from punishment of sin. Salvation means the achievement of that eternal prosperity after which human nature thirsts, and which can be acquired only through true recognition of God, perfect fear and perfect love, and the establishment of a true and strong relationship with God.

Reflection upon the meaning of justice and mercy reveals that there is no conflict between them. Justice means that the rights of people should be safeguarded and that if one person trespasses against another, the one who is wronged should be restored his right specifically, and if that should not be possible, he should be justly compensated, and that the trespasser should be duly chastised

so that order is maintained and wrong-doing is suppressed. Justice comes into play as a result of reason and regulation. The concept of Justice also involves the concept of law. It is Divine law that establishes rights between people. He who contravenes Divine law departs from justice and becomes guilty of sin in Divine estimation.

The punishment of an offender by God Almighty in the hereafter is not a right the enforcement of which can be demanded by the wronged person. If God Almighty should forgive one who has committed a wrong against his brother and should compensate the wronged one richly in contrast with earthly values, it cannot be reasonably said that the demands of justice cannot be met unless the offender is cast into hell.

The truth is that God Almighty, out of His limitless mercy, bestowed His law and guidance upon nations without any right on their side, in order to provide for their welfare. Out of such mercy, divine law regulated their relationship with each other on the basis of justice. Thus justice is in effect a consequence of Divine mercy, and this fountain of human welfare flows out of that source. Had there been no mercy, no guidance, no revealed law and no rights had been established between men, there would have been no concept of trespass or of justice.

Thus the doctrine that Divine justice cannot be fulfilled without atonement is meaningless, and it is a fallacy that justice and mercy cannot be combined in the Divine Being, inasmuch as justice demands punishment and mercy demands forgiveness and forbearance. As we have just indicated, Divine justice is also an aspect of Divine mercy, for it has been instituted for the benefit of man. The Divine law which gives rise to the concept of justice establishes reciprocal rights between people, and all

these rights have been instituted by God Almighty so that order may be maintained and one group should not create disorder by trespassing against another group. All the rights and penalties that relate to life, property and honour are a manifestation of mercy for mankind. The Gospels do not affirm that theft, embezzlement, robbery, murder and false witness become permissible in consequence of the atonement of Jesus, and that the penalties prescribed therefore are remitted. Every offence carries its own penalty, which is still enforced by the Christian courts.

The belief that God, of His infinite mercy, can bestow unlimited reward upon man in respect of his limited righteous action, negates altogether the notion of any one becoming accursed for the purpose of securing man's salvation. The Unity of God has been repeatedly proclaimed in the Bible. Prophet after prophet was raised to establish the Unity of the Divine. Not a single prophet in Israel announced that God had any associate.

In the idiom of the Bible men have often been called gods or sons of God. If Jesus has been called the son of God, he occupies no higher status than those who were also called sons of God.

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. He is Self-Existing, and everything else exists only with His support. If His support were to be withdrawn for a second, the universe would be totally upset. This Mighty Being, Who possesses every good attribute and is free from every defect, weakness and fault, can neither suffer death, nor be killed, nor be crucified.

The Holy Quran has affirmed the truth by pronouncing that Jesus was delivered from death on the cross, and was safeguarded against an accursed death. The Gospels also bear witness to this truth, inasmuch as Jesus had described his resemblance to Jonah,

and every Christian knows that Jonah had not died in the belly of the whale. If Jesus lay dead in the sepulchre, what resemblance was there between him and Jonah?

It is also well known that after his deliverance from the cross, Jesus exhibited his wounds to the disciples. If he had been bestowed a new life of glory, how is it that the wounds of his earthly life were visible on his glorious body?

These are myths on which the doctrine of the godhead of Jesus had been constructed. But the time is coming, indeed it has arrived, when God Almighty will blow away all these myths like minute particles.

Jesus was a Divine Messenger and was a favoured and holy man. It is the height of injustice to conceive, even for a moment, that such a chosen one was hanged upon the cross and, dying on it, became accursed. The favoured servants of God Almighty and His beloved Messengers, who lose themselves in their love for God and, out of that love, discard this mortal life, and are invested with a new and holy life, are bestowed the blessing that they are able to purify others from the stain of accursedness, and cannot become accursed themselves. They may be nailed to the cross, but if death by crucifixion is truly an accursed death, it becomes necessary that such chosen servants of God should be delivered from such a death, and should be safeguarded against its stain.

In Arabic and Hebrew the concept of curse is related to the heart, and a person can be called accursed only if in truth his heart turns away from God, and becomes black, and is bereft of God's mercy, and is deprived altogether of the love of God and is emptied of all recognition of God and, becoming blind and bereft like Satan, is filled with the poison of misguidance, and

retains not a ray of the light of the love and recognition of God, and cuts asunder from all relationship with God, and is filled with rancour and hatred and disgust and enmity towards God, so that God becomes his enemy and is disgusted with him, and he is disgusted with God. It is thus clear that the concept of curse is so vicious and unholy, that it cannot apply to any righteous one who entertains the love of God in his heart. The Christians could not have reflected on the meaning of becoming accursed, at the time of inventing this doctrine, for if they had done so, it is not possible that they should have used this expression for a righteous one like Jesus. Can it be said that at any time the heart of Jesus had, in truth, turned away from God, and had denied God, and was disgusted with God, and had become the enemy of God? Can we imagine that the heart of Jesus ever felt that it had turned away from God, and had become the enemy of God, and was plunged into the darkness of disbelief and denial? Such a concept is not only inconsistent with the station of prophethood and messengership of Jesus, but is also inconsistent with his claim of excellence and holiness, and love, and recognition of the Divine, which is mentioned repeatedly in the Gospels.

A study of the Gospels reveals that Jesus affirmed that he was the light of the world, was a guide, and had an exalted relationship of love with God, and had been bestowed a holy birth by God, and was His beloved son. Then how can the unholy concept of curse be applied to the heart of Jesus, in view of his permanent and holy relationship with God? It is thus proved without a doubt that Jesus did not die on the cross, inasmuch as he was safeguarded from the consequences of death upon the cross. As he did not die on the cross, his heart was fully secured against the unholy condition of becoming accursed. That being so, there was no resurrection, and no bodily ascent to heaven, as these are links of

the same vicious chain.

The Gospels reveal several other factors which refute the notion that Jesus ascended bodily to heaven. It is not necessary to set them out in detail on this occasion. It is well-known that Pontius Pilate held Jesus guiltless, his wife was warned in her dream that Jesus should not be put to trouble, he so arranged that Jesus was not put upon the cross till the afternoon of Friday, a few hours before sunset; the onset of a storm and the spread of darkness necessitated the removal of Jesus from the cross even ahead of sunset, his bones were not broken. In these circumstances, a healthy young man of 33 years, of strong physique and good habits, could not have succumbed within so short a time. He did become unconscious, and was taken down from the cross in that condition, his wounds were treated with an ointment that the disciples had already prepared in view of Divine prophecies, and which has since been known as the Ointment of Jesus. His body was wrapped in a linen cloth fourteen feet and three inches long, and four feet and seven inches wide and was laid in a spacious rock-hewn chamber. He was so ministered unto that, despite having undergone severe physical suffering, and his still fresh wounds, he was soon able to go about his normal life.

It is worthy of note that the Ointment of Jesus is not mentioned in any of the books of medicine that were compiled before the event of the crucifixion, but it is mentioned in more than a thousand authoritative medical books, compiled after the event of the crucifixion with the explanation that it had been prepared for Jesus. The authors of these books belong to all religious denominations. Millions of people have had access to these books and the world of Christianity has known of this ointment over the centuries and has made use of it, and is thus a silent witness that this ointment was prepared for use on the body of Jesus.

The disciples of Jesus bear witness that a few days after the event of the crucifixion they beheld, on the physical body of Jesus, the marks of the wounds and injuries that had been inflicted upon him in the course of the process of crucifixion. They beheld only the physical body of Jesus, and did not observe any glorified manifestation.

There is the evidence of the disciples that Jesus traveled in their company for a few miles on his way to Galilee, and that, at their request, he passed a night with them at Emmaus.

The disciples bear witness that Jesus was at that time hungry, and asked them for food, and was given broiled fish and a honeycomb to eat. This also confirms that he was then in his physical body, and had not discarded it for a spiritual, or a glorified, manifestation.

All this shows that Jesus comported himself, after the event of the crucifixion, all the time, according to the requirements of a physical, material body, eating, drinking, sleeping and travelling, which activities are utterly inconsistent with his having discarded his physical body, and having assumed a glorified spiritual manifestation. It is worthy of reflection how, having been invested with a glorious and immortal body, free from the needs of a mortal body, with which he was to sit on the right hand of God Almighty, and which was free from every stain, pain or defect, and was illumined with eternal Divine glory, he still bore the marks of his injuries and suffered pain and was subject to all the needs and requirements to which a physical body is subject. It is thus obvious that Jesus did not die upon the cross, nor was he invested with a new glorious body but had become unconscious on the cross and had the appearance of one who had died.

The reported affirmation of Jesus:

"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into

Galilee" (Matt. 26:32),

does not cast any doubt on his deliverance from the cross. It is no wonder that a person who was nailed to the cross and had become unconscious so that he appeared to be dead, should, after regaining consciousness, feel that he had risen again. In this context, the expression "*risen again*" cannot mean coming back to life after suffering death. There is no doubt, however, that the deliverance of Jesus, in all the circumstances of his crucifixion, was a great miracle and was not a normal event.

The Holy Quran affirms that neither the Jews, nor the Christians, had a firm belief that Jesus had died on the cross. God Almighty had created circumstances at the time of the crucifixion, wherefrom the Jews and the Christians assumed that Jesus had died on the cross, but they had no clear proof available to satisfy them that Jesus had died on the cross for certain. The evidence that has now become available establishes that God Almighty had delivered Jesus from death on the cross.

God Almighty has caused the proofs and the reasons which had remained hidden, to be manifested in the days of the Promised Messiah[as], whereby it has been established, as clearly as the bright day, that Jesus did not die on the cross and that loved one of God was spiritually exalted. In this context the following pronouncement of the Promised Messiah[as] has great significance:

> "It was God's design that the shining weapon, and the truth disclosing reasoning, that should put an end to the doctrine of the cross, should be made manifest to the world by the Promised Messiah, inasmuch as the Holy Prophet[sa] had prophesied that the religion of the cross would not enter upon its decline, nor would its progress be restrained, till the Promised

Messiah[as] appears, in the world. It is he who would achieve the breaking of the cross. This prophecy indicated that under God's design, in the time of the Promised Messiah, means would become available whereby the reality of the event of the crucifixion would become manifest. That will be the end of this doctrine. It will not be brought about through war or fighting, but through heavenly means which will be made manifest in the shape of knowledge and reason. It was, therefore, necessary that heaven should hold back this evidence and these decisive proofs, till the Promised Messiah should appear in the world. So it has come about. Now that the Promised one has appeared, all eyes will open and people will reflect that God's Messiah having come, minds will now be illumined and hearts will pay attention, and pens will gain strength, and loins will be girded up. Now every fortunate one will be bestowed intelligence, and every right-thinking one will be bestowed wisdom, inasmuch as that which shines in heaven also illumines the earth. Blessed are those who partake of this light and fortunate is the one who is bestowed a portion of it." (Jesus in India, pp. 64-65).

It is necessary to point out that the Holy Shroud of Turin possesses no particular significance in the estimation of the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It is true that this linen cloth has been preserved in the Christian world, with great care and reverence, through centuries. It is either genuine, that is to say, it is the very linen cloth in which the body of Jesus was wrapped up, after it had been treated with the Ointment of Jesus, or it is a fabrication. It is for the Christian world to determine, after

careful investigation and research, whether it is genuine or not. If it is not genuine, why has it been given so much importance and why has it been held in such great honour? If it is genuine, the evidence that it furnishes, in support of the removal of the body of Jesus from the cross while he was still alive, is not in itself fundamental and indispensable. It is merely corroborative. Even if this genuine piece of linen cloth had been lost, its loss would not have detracted in the very least from the very important and plentiful evidence which establishes that, after his deliverance from the cross and his restoration to health, Jesus continued his ministry for a long time among the lost tribes of Israel. The tribes believed in him and it was the result of his teaching that when they came to know of the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, they were able to recognize his truth and became Muslims.

Thus the Holy Shroud has not the character of the missing link, in the chain of evidence in support of the deliverance of Jesus from the cross. If the shroud is a fabrication, the Christians are responsible for according undeserved reverence to it. If it is genuine, it is additional evidence in support of our thesis, and adds to our knowledge on the subject. But if it is not genuine, it does not in any way detract from the knowledge that we possess.

The Divine purpose of the raising of a prophet is, that the people among whom the prophet is raised may be delivered from their vicious life, and by acting upon the guidance furnished through the prophet, should advance towards the One True God and win His love. Jesus was raised among the children of Israel. It is a historical fact that only a portion of two tribes of Israel dwelt in Palestine at the time of the advent of Jesus.

Ten of the twelve tribes had, through various causes, been dispersed through Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, India and Kashmir.

Large Jewish settlements had been established in Kashmir, and they were "lost" not only because they had been cut off from their original home, but they were also "lost" in the sense that they had been weaned away from the law of Moses, and many of them had become Buddhists, or idol-worshipping Hindus.

One of the two principal purposes of the advent of Jesus was, that he should re-establish these lost sheep of the house of Israel on the true teachings of the law of Moses, and should win back those who had become Buddhists into the fold of Moses and into the obedience of the Mosaic law, and to re-establish those who had become Hindus on the Unity of God, and obedience to Mosaic law. Jesus achieved great success in this mission and all these ten tribes achieved the good fortune of believing in the prophethood of Jesus, and became firmly established on the Unity of God.

Jesus was the last prophet in the Mosaic dispensation, and there was to be no other prophet in Israel after him. Prophethood was to be cut off from Israel, and was to be transferred to the House of Ishmael. There was, therefore, the hazard that through their ill-fortune the children of Israel might refuse to accept the prophet who had been mentioned in the Torah (Deut. 18:18) under the title "*That Prophet*". Jesus was, therefore, charged with preparing the minds of the children of Israel for the acceptance of "That Prophet" who was to bring the last, perfect, enduring universal law; the prophet whose coming was to be the coming of God.

History shows that just as the lost tribes believed in Jesus and accepted him, in the same way, almost all of them, who were settled in those lands, believed in the Holy Prophet of Islam, and in the idiom of the Torah, they received at his hands the

baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. Thus Jesus succeeded in the achievement of this purpose of his advent also.

God Almighty has so ordained, that those prophets who are commissioned for a particular purpose, do not suffer death till they have achieved that purpose, or have made provision for its achievement in due course. For instance, John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus. When Jesus was baptised by John with water, the purpose of John's advent was fulfilled, and he did not thereafter survive for long. In the case of Jesus, no great or significant event was manifested before the event of the crucifixion. He had not yet even established contact with the lost sheep towards whom he had been sent, nor had he yet entered upon impressing, upon the minds of the children of Israel, the importance of the advent and the stature of "That Prophet", whose advent had been prophesied by Moses and the other prophets of Israel. The event of the crucifixion occurred in the third year of the ministry of Jesus, and Jesus had passed this brief period in comparative obscurity, and in silent teaching and propagation. The Jews of Palestine paid little attention to him and to what he said. If he was a true Messenger of God, which he undoubtedly was, he was not to die upon the cross. He had had no opportunity of carrying his message to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, nor had he yet made any provision for safeguarding the future generations of those tribes against the misfortune of rejecting "That Prophet" on his advent, nor had he yet impressed upon the minds of the children of Israel the high status of "That Prophet", which had been set forth by Moses and other Prophets under Divine direction.

In the Holy Quran the advent of our Holy Prophet, on whom be the peace and blessings of Allah, has been described as the coming of God Himself (Bani Isra'il 17:82), whereby Satan, with

all his hosts, was put to flight and his teachings were brought into contempt, and he suffered a great defeat.

On account of the universal and comprehensive guidance that was to be committed to the Holy Prophet, God took a firm covenant from the previous Prophets, that they must instruct their people to believe in him and to help him (aal-e-'Imran 3:82). That is why all the prophets from Adam to Jesus affirmed the greatness and glory of the Holy Prophet of Islam (on all of whom be peace).

Moses said in Deut. 32:2:

> "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran."

Thus he indicated clearly, that the manifestation of God's glory would arrive at its perfection at Mount Paran, and that the full refulgence of the sun of truth would be achieved at Mount Paran. The Torah itself indicates that Paran is the mountain near Mecca, where Ishmael, the ancestor of the Holy Prophet, was settled. This is confirmed by geographical maps. It is well-known that no prophet has been raised in Mecca except the Holy Prophet of Islam. Observe, therefore, how clearly has Moses testified that the rays of the sun of righteousness, which shall appear on Mount Paran, shall be the brightest of all and that the climax of the light of truth will be reached in the blessed person of the Holy Prophet.

Time does not permit of the citation of even a few of the numerous prophecies made by a number of prophets including David, Solomon, Isaiah, John and Jesus, which refer clearly to the Holy Prophet of Islam.

We recognise the tremendous achievements of science and technology, but it cannot be denied that these achievements also constitute a threat of ruin and destruction. The only way of

deliverance from the ruin threatened by our own handiwork is, that we should place our hands in the hand of God and discarding totally the worship of idols and of men, and of our own ego, and every type of association of partners with God, we should all gather together under the shade of the mercy of the One True God.

I take this opportunity of conveying to you with great humility and love the following message:
Be happy and sing the praises of God that the Messiah, whose advent had been prophesied in the ancient scriptures, and in the Holy Quran, and had been foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam, that spiritual son of Muhammad, has already appeared. I, who am standing before you, and have the honour to address you, am the deputy and Third Successor of that Messiah. True and deep sympathy and love for you surge through my heart like an ocean. I am made restless by your sufferings, and am rendered sorrowful by your privations. Your real privation is the lack of recognition of your Gracious and Merciful Lord. I call you to that True One, Who provided for all our needs before our coming into existence, and made available to us the means of achieving true prosperity. He bestowed upon us all that was demanded by our faculties and capacities, so that we should not lack anything that may be needed for establishing a living relationship with Him. But we behaved ungratefully. That which had been bestowed upon us, for the purpose of the establishment of peace and security, was employed by us in promoting disorder and corruption. The misuse of that which had been bestowed upon us for the promotion of our health, and the development of our intellect, and the upholding of our morals, and the exaltation of our souls has plunged us into the depths, and has alienated us from God. There is yet time that we should call a halt, recognise our Lord, and turn towards

Him in repentance. He will forgive all our sins and defaults, He will raise us up with love and will lead us into the gardens of His pleasure. Our own tears, and the agonised yearning of our hearts for meeting with God, are our atonement. I urge you to turn to the One God without associate, and to bend your necks to His obedience, for in that lies your total good.

I call you to follow Muhammad, on whom be peace. The paths, treading on which he found his Lord and was bestowed the bounties of both worlds, still bear the marks of his footsteps. Follow those footsteps, for if you do that, you shall win the love of God, and you shall hear His dear voice assuring you :

"If you will be Mine, the universe will be yours."

The false joys and artificial delights of this mortal world, cannot be compared to the love of God. I invite you to make a trial of winning the love of God. That door has been opened, through the ages, for the millions who have knocked on it. Why should you despair that it may not be opened for you? Come forward and, responding to the call of the Successor of the Muslim Messiah, accept Islam, for therein lies your own total good and the good of your future generations, failing which, a terrible catastrophe awaits you, of which I warned you in detail eleven years ago in this city.

Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra]

Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] is a distinguished scholar of world religions. He became Foreign Minister of Pakistan in 1947 and for many years led the Pakistan Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations. He was President of the Seventeenth Session of the General Assembly. He served as Judge of the International Court of Justice at the Hague 1954-1961 and 1964 to 1973. He was Vice-President of the Court (1958-1961) and President (1970-1973).

Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] is the author of several books on Islam. His well-known book, 'Islam-Its Meaning for Modern Man', was published by Harper and Row of New York, U.S.A. He has also translated the Holy Quran and the Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, into English. His book, "Deliverance from the Cross", has just been published.

Jesus-Prophet or God
by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra]

DR. ABA EBAN, an eminent scholar who lectured on Hebrew, Arabic and Persian literature at Cambridge University and later served as Foreign Minister of Israel, has, in his outstanding work MY PEOPLE, summed up his view of Jesus at page 105 as follows:

> Jesus was a Pharisaic Jew. He had lived among the common people of Galilee and was the spokesman of their ideas. Galilee was the stronghold of a robust Jewish patriotism, which found resonance in the teaching of Jesus, insofar as they conformed with those of the ancient prophets. He never considered himself a universal prophet outside the Jewish context. It cannot even be said that he was indifferent to the external forms of religion. He meticulously kept Jewish laws, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem on Passover, ate unleavened bread and uttered a blessing when he drank wine. He was a Jew in word and deed.... He declared in the Sermon on the Mount that he had not come to destroy the Law but to fulfil.

The Rev. Dr. Don Cupit, Emmanuel College, Cambridge, an eminent Anglican theologist, affirmed in a television interview a month ago, that Jesus was wholly man, a prophet, but not God. Rodney Hoare, in his book "The Testimony of the Shroud", which is due to be published within the next few days, opines that the picture of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels is of a solid,

complete human being through whom God was able to speak and act in the same way as He did through prophets and saints. He observes:

> Looked at objectively, the Gospels contain plenty of evidence for Jesus having been not only a normal man of the first century, but also particularly a Jewish one. His knowledge knew very human restraints, and he was strictly first-century Jewish.... It is really his powerful Jewishness which argues most forcefully against his being a part of God. He did not address himself to God's creatures in general but predominantly to his own people. He moved in purely Jewish circles as far as posible.... His teaching was always within the context of the Jewish religion. He even regarded his life as a sacrifice for the sins of the Jewish people past, present and future, as suggested in Jewish scripture. Had he been part of God, this would have been surely ridiculous, for how could God satisfy Himself for the sins of that one race by sacrificing part of Himself in that way? The Jewishness of Jesus shone through his ministry and at times his description of Gentiles suggested second-class, citizens, and though it is true that occasionally he praised the faith he found in a Samaritan or a Roman, his strong preference for Jews lingered among his disciples after his death. It took some time and a lot of persuasion before the Jerusalem Church would agree that the message of Jesus was meant for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. These points would argue for Jesus being a complete Jewish man rather than part of the Universal God. (p.88)

Jesus was a complete man, therefore, and in no way a

> part of God during his life on earth.... It is as a man that Christ is more relevant. True he was the son of God and addressed God as Father but he was also the son of Man, and made it clear that we are all sons of God. (p.95)
>
> ... Muslims who believe Jesus to have been a great prophet of God, will no longer need to be offended by dogmatic Christian insistence on his divinity. (p.118)

Jesus was the last prophet in Israel. He was called the son of God, an expression that was in common use in scripture but was always employed metaphorically and in no single instance did it connote God. Nowhere in the Gospels or the Epistles is it said that Jesus referred to himself as God or implied that he was God. The expression, Lord, was applied to him but there is no evidence that those who made use of this expression with reference to him believed, or meant to convey, that he was God. It was used as a synonym for master.

It was, long after his time that the expression son of God was transmuted into God, the Son, meaning thereby that Jesus was the second person in the Trinity. The entire concept of the Trinity was foreign to the thinking of Jesus. He always referred to himself as having been sent by God, meaning that he was a divine messenger. For instance:

> This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. (John 17:3)
>
> I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear I judge and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.
>
> (John 5:30)

> I have greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me (John 5:36)
>
> And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. (John 5:37)
>
> Ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, him ye believe not. (John 5:39)
>
> He that sent me is true. (John 8:26)
>
> Jesus said unto them, if God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I myself, but He sent me. (John 8:42)
>
> They have believed that Thou didst send me. (John 17:8)
>
> For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me. . . . And this is the will of Him that sent me.... (John 6:38-40)

It is clear, therefore, that Jesus consistently put himself forward as one who had been sent by God, that is to say, as a messenger of God. In fact, his function as a messenger of God was defined even before his birth by divine direction as set out both in the Gospel and in the Holy Quran. The angel that appeared to Mary and told her that she would bear a son whom she should name Jesus also informed her that God would give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32-33). The Quran affirms that Mary was told that God would teach Jesus the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel and would make him a messenger to the children of Israel (aal-e-'Imran 3:49-50). It is true that in Luke 1:32, he is called the son of the Highest and in 1:35, the son of God; but

these expressions in Biblical idiom do not at all connote Divinity or partnership in Divinity. In Psalms, 82:6 we read:

> I have said, ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the most High.

In numerous instances the expression son of God is applied to prophets, to the righteous and to believers. The following are only some examples out of many:

> Israel is My son, even My first-born. (Exodus 4:22)
>
> Also I will make him (David) My first born, higher than the kings of the earth. (Psalms 89:27).
>
> He (Solomon) shall be My son, and I will be his father. (1 Chron. 22: 10)
>
> Now, My son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thee, and build the house of Lord, thy God, as he has said of thee. (1 Chron. 22:11)
>
> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. (Matt. 5:9)
>
> That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5:45)
>
> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13)
>
> For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs;

> heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Romans 8:14-17)
>
> Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. (John 3:1)

More significant than all this is the explanation furnished by Jesus himself, which is as follows:

> Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being man, makest thyself God. (John 10:31-33)

Now here the crucial question was directly posed to Jesus. Did he claim to be God, the second person in the Trinity, as he subsequently came to be represented? His answer must be accepted by all those who profess to believe in him and to follow him.

> Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemeth; because I said, I am the son of God. (John 10: 34-37)
>
> For as much then as we are the offspring of God
>
> (Acts 17:29)

This makes it quite clear that the expression son of God when applied to Jesus, by himself or by others, meant no more in his case than it means in its application to others in scripture, of

which we have set out several instances above. He was son of God in that sense, but in no wise at all God, the Son, the second person in the Trinity as is now claimed.

It is contended, however, that in the same context Jesus had also said: *I and my Father are one* (John 10:30) and; *the Father is in me, and I in him* (John 10:39); and that these affirmations lend support to the claim made on his behalf that he was not merely the son of God in the Biblical idiom, but had a relationship with God which elevated him to the Godhead and made him a partner and an associate of God on an equal footing. We shall now proceed to show that in the idiom of the Bible the expressions relied upon do not carry the matter any further and do not furnish the least evidence of the divinity of Jesus. For instance:

> At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (John 14:20)
>
> That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: That the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one: and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. (John 17:21-23)
>
> He that knoweth not the Son knoweth not the Father which hath sent him. (John 5:23)
>
> He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life. (John 5:24)
>
> One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all. (Ephesians 4:6)

The distinction between God and Jesus was well understood

among the disciples and the early Christians, as would be appreciated from the following:

> For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spmt, and rejoice in Christ, Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phillippians 3:3)
>
> But to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we by him. (1 Cor. 8:6)

Jesus himself brought out the distinction clearly in attributing divinity to God alone, Who was also his God, as for instance:

> Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. (John 20:17)

Jesus had not the slightest hesitation in affirming the Unity of God. For instance:

> One of the scribes came . . . and asked him, which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord, our God, is One Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: This is the first commandment.... And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is One God; and there is none other but He. (Mark 12:29-30 and 32)

God alone is immortal:

> the blessed and only potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and

power everlasting. (1 Tim. 6:15-16)

The doctrine of the Trinity necessarily imports the complete equality in all respects of the three persons of the Trinity, for if there were inequality in any respect between them that would mean the superiority of one over the other two in which case the one, or the two, that lacked equality could not be God; the one who had superiority over the other two would be God of the universe, including the other two. Even a cursory study of the Gospels and the Epistles reveals that in respect of the attributes of which there is a record the Father is supreme and there is a disclaimer by Jesus of those attributes.

For instance, God alone is the true source of honour, as is said:

> How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? (John 5:44)

This finds support in the Quran:

> 'Whoso seeks honour should realise that all honour belongs to God. (Fatir 35:11)

All holiness belongs to God alone, as is said:

> And, behold one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is, God: But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (Matt. 19:16-17)

Jesus disclaimed absolute power. When Zebedee asked him to grant that her two sons may sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left hand, in his kingdom, the reply given by him was:

> To sit on my right hand, and on my left is not mine

to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. (Matt. 20:23)

His knowledge was not co-extensive with the knowledge of God. Concerning the day and hour of his second coming, after setting out certain signs, he said:

But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. (Mark 13:32)

The Quran affirms that God's knowledge comprehends all that is in the heavens and in the earth but that man's, knowledge is limited to that much which God bestows upon him:

He knows all that is before them and all that is behind them, and they cannot compass aught of His knowledge, except that which He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the care of them wearies Him not. He is the Most High, the Most Gr1eat. (al-Baqarah 2:256)

Apparently, not only Jesus lacked equality with God he also lacked equality with the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, as he said:

Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. (Matt. 12:31-32)

The Quran lays down that all prayer is to be addressed to God:

Unto Him is the true prayer. Those on whom they call

beside Him, do not respond to them at all. (ar-Ra'd, 13:15)

Jesus had the habit of prayer. As for instance:

> He withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed. (Luke 5:16)
>
> He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. (Luke 9:28)
>
> And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. (Matt. 21:22)
>
> It came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples. said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples, and he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.... (Luke 11:1-2)

Thus quite rightly all his supplications and those of his disciples were addressed to God. Obviously, therefore, there was not equality between the supplicant and Him to Whom supplication was addressed. God had the power to respond to supplication and to grant it. Quite clearly Jesus lacked such power, for indeed if he had possessed that power his supplicating God would have been meaningless. Had he been the second person in the Trinity, he would have been in no need of supplication, as he would have had the power to do all that he wished. This is well illustrated in his repeated supplications in the garden of Gethsemane, when he fell on his face, and prayed, saying:

> O my Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. (Matt. 26:39).

This shows that the relationship between Jesus and God was that between a righteous servant and his gracious master. '*Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*'; is a clear affirmation of the supremacy

of the Divine will over the will of Jesus which was subordinate to the will of God. As he himself affirmed, he had been sent not to do his own will but to do God's will (John 6:38); which is an exact description of the relationship between God and a Prophet.

As a contrast, there is no mention of the Father ever supplicating the Son, which is clear proof that the Father is supreme and the son is subordinate to Him, as a servant is subordinate to his master.

Assuming that there had been complete equality between the three persons of the Trinity in every respect, status, knowledge, power and all the other attributes of the Divine, this would only have led to confusion and conflict of the type of which we read in the mythologies of certain creeds, for the situation would present an insoluble dilemma. If one of them had authority to control the others, that would mean the subordination of the others to him, and thus equality would be negated. If there were no control there would be conflict. If there were complete identity of wills between all three and of everything else, there would be redundance. As the Quran has said:

> If there had been in the heavens and earth other gods beside God then surely both would have gone to ruin. Then glorified be God, the Lord of the Throne, above that which they ascribe to Him. He cannot be questioned concerning what He does, but they will be questioned. (al-Anbiya' 21:23-24).

Jesus called the attention of his opponents to the fact that Moses had prophesied about his coming. He said:

> For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? (John 5:46-47)

It is claimed that there are several prophecies in the Torah and other books of the Bible concerning the advent of Jesus, and that the Jews were awaiting the advent of the Messiah when Jesus began his ministry. It is those prophecies to which Jesus was seeking to draw their attention when he referred to the writings of Moses. What is significant for our present purpose is that all those prophecies had reference to the advent of a prophet and not to the advent of God in the capacity of the second person of the Trinity.

The truth of the matter clearly is that Jesus was the last prophet in Israel, a believer in Moses and all the prophets of Israel who followed after Moses. He was bound by the Mosaic law and adhered to it. It is true that he often set forth its true import in contrast with its letter, but that was the exercise of his prophetic function. He did not mean, and had no authority, to abrogate the Mosaic law or any part of it. This he made quite clear in his emphatic declaration:

> Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-19).

That is why he told the one who had asked what good thing he should do that he may have eternal life, to keep the commandments; by which he clearly meant the commandments of the Mosaic law.

His ministry as a prophet was confined to the children of Israel.

He was the heir to the throne of David and was to reign over the house of Jacob. (Luke 1: 32-33). His own conception of the character of his ministry was manifested clearly in the following incident:

> Behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word, and his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat out of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (Matt. 15: 22-28).

This account sets forth clearly and positively that Jesus was a messenger of God sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel and that the scope of his ministry did not extend beyond the children of Israel. The woman of Canaan is said to have worshipped him at one stage, but her worship amounted to no more than an entreaty for help, so that the expression worshipped has been used instead of beseeched. The verse could well have run: Then came she and prayed him to help her. Be that as it may, the manifestation on her part of extreme reverence for Jesus did not invest Jesus with divinity, and his response to her entreaty was even more emphatic than his first response, exhibiting

an extreme degree of contempt for the Gentiles. He did not consider it fitting to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs. The contempt apart, it leaves no room for speculating that his mission as a messenger could have included within its scope anyone outside the house of Israel. His yielding to her entreaties in the end was no indication that he had misconceived the scope of his mission and that now he had a better understanding of its extent. It meant only that he had been moved to compassion by the depth and sincerity of her faith in him. His mission was a beneficent one, and even if a non-Israeli believed in him sincerely it would do him no harm, and nothing but good could proceed from it.

It is said that on another occasion he had exhorted his disciples to carry his message into all the towns and villages and to all the people, but there is nothing to indicate that by all the towns and villages and all the people he meant anything more than all the towns and villages of Israel and the whole of the Jewish people.

He clearly directed his disciples to that effect, as would appear from:

> These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matt. 10:5-6).

Thus, the concept of Trinity finds no support from anything that Jesus is reported to have said. It is a concept which bewilders reason, offends conscience, and affronts Divine Majesty. It is utterly inconsistent with the concept of the Godhead.

A body of distinguished Anglican theologians have described it as a myth, meaning, A story which is told but which is not literally true or an idea or an image which is applied to someone

or something but which does not literally apply, but which invites a particular attribute in its hearers ... that Jesus was, God, the Son Incarnate, is not literally true, since it has no literal meaning, but it is an application to Jesus of a mythical concept whose function is analogous to that of the notion of divine sonship ascribed in the ancient world to a king.[1]

The writers of this book are convinced that another major theological development is called for in this last part of the twentieth century. The need arises from growing knowledge of Christian origins, and involves a recognition that Jesus was (as he is presented in Acts 2:22) *'a man approved by God by'* for a special role within the divine purpose, and that the later conception of him as God Incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, living in human life, is a mythological or poetic way of expressing his significance for us. This recognition is called for in the interests of truth; but it also has increasingly important practical implication for our relationship to the peoples of the other great world religions.[2]

God is not subject to the contingencies of birth and death. He is Ever-living and neither begets, nor is begotten. The Quran sets forth a true concept of Him which does not in any way diminish, confine, or limit Him. For instance:

> He is God, the Single; God the Self-Existing and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him. (al-Ikhlas, 112:2-5)
>
> Put thy trust in the One Who is Ever-living and is the source of life, Who dies not, and glorify Him with His praise. (al-Furqan, 25:59)

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1 The Myth of God Incarnate, Preface, p.ix.

2 Ibid, p.178.

The Quran utterly and emphatically rejects, the concept of the Trinity. For instance:

> They allege: The Gracious One has taken unto Himself a son. Assuredly, you have uttered a monstrous thing! The heavens might well nigh burst thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, because they ascribe a son to the Gracious One; whereas. it becomes not the Gracious One to take unto Himself a son. There is no one in the heavens and the earth but he shall come to the Gracious One as a bondman. (Maryam, 19:89-94)
>
> All praise belongs to God, Who has sent down the Book to His servant, free from all distortion, full of truth and guidance, that it may give warning of a grievous chastisement proceeding from Him, and that it may give the believers who work righteousness the glad tidings that they shall have a good reward which they shall enjoy forever. And that it may warn those who say: God has taken unto Himself a son. They have no knowledge whatever concerning it, nor had their fathers. Grievous is the assertion that they make. They only utter a falsehood. (al-Kahf, 18:2-6)
>
> We sent no Messenger before thee but We directed him: There is no God but I; so worship Me alone. But they say: The Gracious One has taken to Himself a son. Holy is He. Those whom they so designate are only His honoured servants. They utter not a word more than He directs, and they only carry out His commands. He knows what lies ahead of them and what is left behind them, and they intercede not except only he

whose intercession He permits, and they tremble with fear of Him. Whosoever of them should say: I am a god beside Him; We shall requite him with hell. Thus do We requite the wrongdoers. (al-Anbiya', 21:26-30)

Keep in mind, when God will ask Jesus, son of Mary: Didst thou say to the people: Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah? And he will answer: Holy art Thou. It behoves me not to have said that to which I have no right. Had I said it, Thou wouldst surely have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou Who possessest full knowledge of all that is hidden. I said naught to them except that which Thou didst command me, that is: Worship God, my Lord and your Lord. I watched over them as long as I was present among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the One to watch over them. Indeed Thou dost watch over all things. If Thou decide to punish them they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, then surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise. (al-Ma'idah, 5:117-119).

People of the Book! exceed not the bounds in the matter of your religion, and say not of God anything but the truth. Indeed, the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was but a Messenger of God and the fulfilment of glad tidings which He conveyed to Mary and a mercy from Him. So believe in God and His Messengers and say not: There are three gods. Desist, it will be the better for you. Indeed, God is the only One God. His Holiness brooks not that He should have a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens

and whatever is in the earth. Sufficient is God as a Guardian. Surely, the Messiah would never disdain to be accounted a servant of God, nor would the angels who are close to God. Those who disdain to worship Him and consider themselves above it will He gather all together before Himself. (an-Nisa', 4:172-173)

Those certainly are disbelievers who say: God is none but the Messiah, son of Mary; whereas the Messiah himself taught: Children of Israel, worship God Who is my Lord and your Lord. Surely God has forbidden heaven to him who associates partners with God, and the Fire will be his resort. The wrongdoers shall have no helpers. Those certainly are disbelievers who say: God is the third of three. There is no one worthy of worship but the One God. If they desist not from that which they say, a grievous chastisement shall surely afflict those of them that disbelieve. Will they not then turn to God and beg His forgiveness, seeing that God is Most Forgiving. Ever Merciful. (al-Ma'idah 5:73-75)

The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger; many Messengers have passed away before him. His mother was a paragon of truth and they both were in need of and ate food. Observe how We explain the Signs for their benefit, then observe how they are led away. Ask them: Do you worship beside God that which has no power to do you harm or good? It is God Who is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Admonish them: People of the Book, exceed not the bounds in the matter of your religion unjustly, nor follow the vain desires of a people who themselves went astray before and caused many others to go astray, and who

strayed away from the right path. (al-Ma'idah 5:76-78).

The subject of God and His attributes, through which alone a true concept of Him may be formed, is vast and limitless. The Quran sets forth a wealth of instruction concerning divine attributes and their operation. It is. not necessary for our present purpose to embark upon a detailed discussion of the subject. By way of illustration, however, attention might be drawn to the following passage which should be studied and pondered with great care:

> God is He beside Whom there is no god, the Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is God far above that which they associate with Him. He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (al-Hashr, 59:23-25)

Man is desirous of righteous progeny to help him in his old age, to carry on his name and the family after his. death, and to bring him posthumous honour. God is Ever-living, Self-subsisting and Self-sustaining. All that is in heaven and earth belongs to Him, obeys Him and glorifies Him. What need has He of a son?

What can a son do for Him that He cannot do Himself? To attribute a son to Him, as a partner in the Godhead, would be to offer the gravest affront to Him.

M.M.AHMAD

Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad was born in 1913 at Qadian, Punjab, India and is the grandson of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah. He became a director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank) in 1972 and in 1974 Deputy Executive Secretary of the Joint Development Committee.

Mr. Ahmad took a B.A. at the Government College, Lahore, followed by a B.A.(Hons) at London University. He became a barrister of the Middle Temple.

He joined the Indian Civil Service and held a number of important positions in Government. In 1966 he was appointed Deputy Chairman (with ministerial rank) of the Government of Pakistan's Planning Commission. In 1971 he was appointed Financial Advisor (with Cabinet rank) to the President of Pakistan.

The Lost Tribes of Israel
by M.M.AHMAD

The three most important world religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam have a deep though conflicting interest and involvement in Jesus. Between them, the three religions claim adherents who account for a vast majority of the world population. The present conference is designed to focus world attention on a matter of great importance so that the controversy around the person of Jesus is resolved and all seekers after truth are enabled to shed their wrong beliefs. It certainly is an invitation to each one of us to reflect deeply on the matter, weigh objectively the evidence and historical proof now available, and acknowledge the truth even if it should be in conflict with our present beliefs.

The enigma surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus and his postcrucifixion life among the lost tribes of Israel was first untangled through Divine guidance by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, in his book *Jesus in India* which was written as far back as 1899. The evidence on the subject which has been gathered by many scholars since and which has been put together from older books has only confirmed the thesis which he had presented some 80 years back. The controversy still persists, the differences still exist, but the consensus in the direction pointed out by the Promised Messiah, at the close of the last century, is unmistakable. We believe it is only a matter of time that the world will be compelled to acknowledge the truth which Divine guidance had revealed to him. This will have a profound impact on the adherents of all the three great world religions

and will greatly help them to reach common ground from which should arise an era of tranquillity and peace after which humanity strives ceaselessly, but without success so far.

It will be relevant if the present beliefs of the vast majority of the adherents of the three religions on Jesus are briefly summarized here.

The Jews totally reject Jesus, share no part of his mission and, indeed, believe that according to the Old Testament his death on the cross was an accursed death. (Deuteronomy 21:23).

The Christians, on the other hand, claim that Jesus died on the cross in atonement of the sins of humanity, was resurrected soon thereafter and then ascended to Heaven.

The vast majority of orthodox Muslims believe that Jesus was never put upon the cross, ascended bodily to heaven and will come down to earth again to smash the cross and what it stands for and to purify the faith of the believers.

In common with other Muslims, the Ahmadiyya Community believes that Jesus was a righteous prophet raised by God among the Israelites. The Ahmadiyya version of the crucifixion is that Jesus did not die on the cross. When he was taken down from the cross he was still alive but only in a state of swoon or unconsciousness. He was removed to the sepulchre by his close friends and followers. Healing ointments and herbs were administered to his wounds and he was restored to health. He then travelled to the East in search of the lost ten tribes of Israel in fulfilment of his Divine mission, lived to a ripe old age and died and was buried in Kashmir. References to his Second Advent are not to be interpreted as his return in his physical body but relate to the advent of one who would come in his power and spirit,

with many similarities; he will restore and revive the beliefs and faith of the Muslims and others in the true teachings of Islam.

Before I revert to the proclaimed Divine mission of Jesus to the lost tribes of Israel, it will be helpful to show that he did not die on the cross. Since this is not the main subject of my address, and will no doubt be covered by other speakers, I will confine myself to brief references in support of Jesus' survival from the cross. This alone can form the basis of his subsequent travels in search of the lost tribes of Israel in the post-crucifixion period of his life.

The fact that Jesus did not die on the cross can be established on the basis of evidence drawn from the following sources:

(a) The Scriptures and the Holy Quran;
(b) Medical evidence;
(c) Other historical proof.

Let us first examine the evidence provided by the Scriptures and the Holy Quran.

1. First of all, the prophecy of Jesus himself as recorded in Matthew 12:39,40 and Luke 11:29,30. There shall be no sign given to it but the sign of Jonah, the prophet. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Now it is an admitted fact that Jonah entered alive into the whale's belly and also came out alive. Jesus tells us that he shall be in the heart of the earth in the same manner as Jonah was in the whale's belly. In other words, he would enter alive into the heart of the earth and come out alive. No other interpretation can establish a similarity between the two. In citing his resemblance with the prophet Jonah, Jesus foretold

his own end, indicating that he would not die on the cross but would, like Jonah, be only in a state of unconsciousness.

2. The Old Testament says that *"a person who dies on the cross is accursed of God"*. Such a death is inconceivable for a righteous prophet of God and the occurrence of such an event deserves to be rejected out of hand on that score alone.

3. After Jesus was taken down from the cross, his body was handed over to Joseph of Arimathea, a respectable, noble man of the neighbourhood commanding great influence with everyone, including the Romans. He was a secret disciple of Jesus. The handing over of the body of Jesus to him was part of the design of Pilate to save Jesus, since Pilate, both under the influence of his wife's dream and his own conviction, was favourably disposed toward Jesus, and whatever hostile action he took against Jesus was only out of fear of the Jews. Joseph found that Jesus was in fact not dead but only unconscious and removed him to a large new sepulchre in a garden close by.

4. The Gospels afford further proof that it was not in a celestial body but in the same body of flesh and bone which had been nailed to the cross that Jesus appeared to his disciples after his supposed death. Thus we read that Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples as they sat at a meal (Mark 16:9,14). And when they saw him they supposed that they had seen a spirit but he showed them his hands and feet and asked them to handle him saying, A spirit hath not

bones and flesh as ye see me have. Then he took from them a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb and ate it before them (Luke 24:39-43). It is evident that the acts which Jesus performed, like eating, drinking, sleeping, holding conversations and taking a long journey, were performed with a human body and not with a celestial body. This proves irrefutably that Jesus did not bodily rise to Heaven.

The Gospels show that Jesus remained on the cross for a very short time and because of the sanctity of the Sabbath on the following day and the storm on that afternoon, his body was removed speedily from the cross. His wounds were treated with a special ointment and on gaining strength he escaped to Galilee.

Let us now see what evidence the Holy Quran provides on the subject. It is stated in the Holy Quran:
The Jews did not slay Jesus nor did they put an end to his life on the cross but simply were in doubt concerning his end.[1] In other words, they imagined that Jesus had died on the cross which was, in fact, not true.

Another verse of the Holy Quran regarding Jesus runs thus:
He would be distinguished in this world and in the next and would be one of those who have near access to God.[2] In other words, it was proclaimed that Jesus would attain to dignity, honour and eminence in this world and in the next. Worldly honour and eminence certainly did not come to him in the land of his birth and the fulfilment of this part of the prophecy took place only after he had journeyed to Kashmir where he achieved temporal dignity also among the lost tribes of Israel.

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1 an-Nisa', 4:158

2 aal-e-'Imran, 3:46

Again we find in the Holy Quran the words which show that in answer to a question from God if he had taught the people to take him (i.e. Jesus) for God, Jesus would state: ... and I was a witness of their actions so long as I lived among them but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast watched over them.[3] These words tell us plainly that the Christians departed from Jesus' teachings after his death. In another verse, the Holy Quran hints at his journey to Kashmir. It says: ... and We gave Jesus and his mother refuge in a lofty place which was secure and watered with springs. The word awa used in Arabic signifies the giving of refuge against danger. It will thus be seen that the thesis about Jesus having escaped from the cross, as stated in the Gospels, is also confirmed by the verses on this subject in the Holy Quran.

Let us now see what the medical research and evidence on this subject signifies.

We learn from the Gospels that Jesus remained nailed to the cross only about three hours and this was by no means sufficient to bring about his death. It was a Friday afternoon when he was put upon the cross. The following day was the Sabbath and the Passover of the Jews who were strictly forbidden to leave anyone nailed to the cross on the sacred day. There was darkness over the whole land and the Jews, fearing lest they should sin against the Lord by profaning the Holy Day, hastened to take down the body of Jesus. Happily for Jesus, although the soldiers came and broke the legs and bones of the other two, who had been put on the cross at the same time, they gave no such treatment to Jesus. Further medical evidence is provided by the story of the piercing of the side of Jesus with a spear by one of the soldiers at the time of the removal of the body from the cross, when blood and water poured forth from the resultant wound. This flow of blood

3 al-Ma'idah, 5:118

from the wound shows that Jesus had not died upon the cross as blood could not have poured out from a dead body.

We also have the evidence in hundreds of books on medicine which describe an ointment as marham Isa which means the "ointment of Jesus". Materia Medica in Greek stated that this ointment was first prepared for the injuries received by Jesus Christ. The reference to this ointment is found in over a thousand books of medicine including the famous book *Qanun* by Bu Ali Sena (Avicenna). The ointment is particularly suited to stop the flow of blood from external injuries.

There has recently been another remarkable discovery in the form of the Turin Shroud, whose history goes back to the ninth century, when it was in Jerusalem.

Prof. Max Frie, a distinguished criminologist and director of the scientific laboratory of the Zurich police, has tested the Turin Shroud for the pollen adhering to it, and, after years of meticulous analysis, using the most advanced techniques, has been able to build up a detailed picture of the shroud's history and origins. In particular, he discovered on the shroud tiny grains of fossilized pollen that, after detailed tests, turned out to be from plants existing only in Palestine twenty centuries ago. This result of Max Frie's investigation into the shroud is contained in Mr. Faber-Kaiser's book *Jesus Died in Kashmir* published in 1976. The author is a scholar of comparative religion who has pieced together an impressive dossier which fills a number of biblical lacunae that have perplexed scholars for hundreds of years. Let me quote another passage from this author's book:

> After seven years of investigations concerning the shroud that covered (Christ's) body, many scientists have come to the conclusion that Jesus was buried

> alive. The experts affirm that the Holy Shroud preserved in Turin lay on a crucified body that suffered exactly the same passion as Jesus, but state that this person did not die on the cross, but was buried while still alive. The twenty-eight bloodstains on the shroud prove this. The investigators assure us that a corpse wrapped in a shroud could not bleed in that manner. Jesus was buried alive, unless a second Jesus existed and he was made to suffer the same agony.

In the same book the author quotes from Kurt Berna's book in German *Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross*. This author talks of the importance of the discovery of this shroud for both the Christian and the Jewish religions and indeed for Islam also which he omitted to mention and, in his letter to Pope John XXIII, he clearly mentioned that

> "... this discovery suggests that the present and past teachings of Christianity are incorrect".

Kurt Berna also concludes that medical evidence shows that Jesus was not dead when he was wrapped in the shroud because had he been dead no fresh blood could have flowed from his injured body and left traces on the cloth.

It will thus be seen that the combined evidence from the Scriptures, the Holy Quran, important medical research and the recent stimulating research on the Turin Shroud clearly affirm that Jesus did not die on the cross. Now, if Jesus did not die on the cross and did not bodily ascend to Heaven, where did he go? We have shown that the story of his resurrection and bodily ascension is a myth. Incidentally, no one has cared to explain why there was an interval of three days between the removal of the body from the cross and Jesus' alleged resurrection and

ascension to heaven. This interval of three days is, in fact, only consistent with his medical treatment and escape after gaining strength from his ordeal on the cross. This introduces us to the story of his travels in search of the lost tribes of Israel.

We read in the Bible that Jesus Christ was sent only *"to the lost sheep of the House of Israel"* (Matthew 15:24) and that he had come . . . to seek and save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10). Now if the Jews living in Palestine are to be regarded as lost then the Israelites who had settled farther afield must certainly be so regarded, for they were lost physically as well as spiritually. Jesus further said that he had come to seek that which was lost and this can by no means apply to any but the Israelites who lived further away from Palestine. The Jews of Palestine were around him in large numbers and, therefore, it was not necessary for him to seek them.

It is an historical fact that the Israelites were divided into 12 tribes of which two were in the country where Jesus taught his Gospel and was put on the cross and the other 10 were scattered in other lands. The assigned Divine mission of Jesus would not have been complete, much less could it be described as successful, without his appearance among the remaining 10 tribes representing a vast majority of the Israeli people. The choice here is either to admit that Jesus failed to comply with his Divine mission - an obvious contradiction of terms in regard to any prophet - or that he did travel to that part of the world where the remaining 10 tribes, representing an overwhelming majority, had settled.

There is other evidence in the Gospels of Jesus going to the East. The star which indicated his birth appeared in the East (Matthew 2:2). Guided by this star certain wise men undertook a long journey and visited the place of his birth. This shows clearly that they had been waiting for his appearance. As the promise of

the appearance of a Messiah and the signs of his advent had been given to none but the Israelites, therefore, the men that came from the East on seeing the star must have been Israelites.

It is claimed that the people of Kashmir, Afghanistan, parts of India and the surrounding lands represent the lost tribes of Israel. Let us examine whether this contention can be proved by historical and other forms of evidence.

Let me begin with a quotation from the second book of Esdras:

> And whereas thou sawest that he gathered another peaceable multitude unto him, those are the ten tribes which were carried away prisoner out of their own land in the time of Hosea, the King, whom Shalmanesar, the King of Assyria, led away as captive, and he crossed them over the waters, as they came into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves that they would leave the multitude of the heathen and go forth into a farther country . . . that they might raise up their statues which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into the Euphrates by the narrow passage of the river, for the Most High then showed signs for them, and held still the flood till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, even for a year and a half; and the same region is called Asareth.

This shows that the ten tribes had not returned to their "own land" but had left their place of captivity for a place which to them looked even farther away from their own land, i.e. further towards the East, and to a place called Asareth.

The confirmation of what has been stated above is to be found in Tabaqat-i-Nasiri where it is stated:

> . . . in the time of the Shansabi dynasty, a people

> called Bani Israel (Children of Israel) used to live in Asareth and were engaged in trade. Thomas Ledlie in his book, More Ledlian, writing on the origin of Afghans, gives cogent reasons for connecting Asareth with Hazara District in the N.W.F. Province of Pakistan; and the territory of Kashmir adjoins that of Hazara. But the old boundary of Asareth in Swat was just on the opposite bank of the Indus river, and, higher up near Chilas, it ran into Kashmir territory.

St. Jerome, who wrote in the fifth century of the Christian era while discussing the Dispersion of Israel, stated ... Until this day the ten tribes are subjects to the Kings of the Persians nor has their captivity ever loosened.

Another eminent scholar, Dr. Alfred Edersheim, in his book entitled The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah, says that vast numbers of Israelites, estimated at millions, inhabited the trans-Euphrates provinces - the great mass of the ten tribes was in the days of Christ, as in our own times, lost to the Hebrew nation.

We read in the Jewish Encyclopedia under the heading Tribes:

> Abraham Farissol identifies the River Ganges with the River Gozan and assumes that the Bani-Israel of India are the descendants of the lost ten tribes.

Let us look more closely at the history of the people of these regions.

The claim of Afghans to be the Children of Israel is not merely founded on tradition. It is supported by ancient monuments, old inscriptions and historical works which are still to be found in manuscripts in their possession. In these books of history the

genealogies of the Afghan tribes are given in great detail. The most ancient manuscript available to us is *Rauzat ul Albab fi Tawarikh-ul-Akabir wal Ansab* -The Garden of the Learned in the History of Great Men and Genealogies -by Abu Suleman Daud bin Abul Fazal Muhammad Albenaketi which was written in 717 A.H.[4] and in which the author traces the ancestry of the Afghans to the Israelites.

Bukhtawar Khan in his most valuable universal history *Mirat-ul-Alam*, the Mirror of the World, gives a vivid account of the journeys of the Afghans from the Holy Land to Ghor, Ghazni, Kabul and other places in Afghanistan. Similarly Hafiz Rahmat bin Shah Alam in his *Khulasat-ul-Ansab* and Fareed-ud--Din Ahmad in *Risala-i-Ansab-i-Afghana* give the history of the Afghans and deal with their genealogies. They both prove that the Afghans are the descendants of Israel through King Talut.

Sir Alexander Burnes in his book *Travels into Bokhara* which he published in 1835 states:

> The Afghans called themselves Bani Israel, that is Children of Israel. The Afghans look like Jews and the younger brother remarries the widow of the elder. The Afghans entertain strong prejudices against the Jewish nation which would at least show that they have no desire to claim, without just cause a descent from them.

The same distinguished author, when he was sent as British Envoy to the Court of Kabul in 1837, questioned the King of the Afghans about the descent of his people from the Israelites.

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4 A.H. stands for "After Hijrah". Literally means 'after migration' and refers to the migration of the Holy Prophet[sa] from Makkah to Madinah. The Islamic calendar is also referred to as Hijrah which commences from the time of the Holy Prophet's[sa] migration to Madinah in .622 A.D.

He was told by the King that his people had no doubt of that.

Similarly, Dr. Joseph Wolff, in his book *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara in the Years 1843-1845* was,

> "wonderfully struck with the resemblance which the Yusuf Zayes and the Khaibaries, two of their Afghan tribes, bear to the Jews".

The same is affirmed by J. B. Fraser in his book *An Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia and Afghanistan* which he published in 1843 and I quote:

> According to the Afghans' own tradition they believe themselves to be descendants from the Jews . . . they preserved the purity of their religion until they embraced Islam.

Again, we have the evidence of George Moore in his famous work *Lost Tribes* published in 1861. He cited numerous facts to prove that these tribes are traceable to the Afghans and the Kashmiris. After giving details of the character of the wandering Israelites, he said:

> And we find that the very natural character of Israel reappears in all its life and reality in countries where people call themselves Bani Israel and universally claim to be the descendants of the Lost Tribes. The nomenclature of their tribes and districts, both in ancient geography, and at the present day, confirms this universal natural tradition. Lastly, we have the route of the Israelites from Media to Afghanistan and India marked by a series of intermediate stations bearing the names of several of the tribes and clearly indicating the stages, of their long and arduous journey.

Moore then goes on to say:

> Sir William Jones, Sir John Malcolm and the missionary Chamberlain, after full investigation, were of the opinion that the Ten Tribes migrated to India, Tibet and Cashemire through Afghanistan.

Moore has mentioned only three eminent writers on the subject. But reference can also be made with advantage to General Sir George Macmunn, Col. G. B. Malleson, Col. Failson, George Bell, E. Balfour, Sir Henry Yule and Sir George Rose. They, one and all, independently came to the same conclusion.

Among more recent writers on the ancestry of the Afghans, Dr. Alfred Edersheim states as follows:

> Modern investigations have pointed to the Nestorians and latterly, with almost convincing evidence (so far as it is possible), to the Afghans as descendants from the lost tribes.

Similarly, Sir Thomas Holditsh, in his book, *The Gates of India* says:

> But there is one important people (of whom there is much more to be said) who call themselves Bani Israel, who claim a descent from Cush and Ham, who have adopted a strange mixture of Mosaic Law in Ordinances in their moral code, who (some sections at least) keep a feast which strongly accords with the Passover, who hate the Yahudi (Jew) with a traditional hatred, and for whom no one has yet been able to suggest any other origin than the one they claim, and claim with determined force, and these people are the overwhelming inhabitants of Afghanistan and Kashmir.

It will, therefore, be acknowledged that ethnical and historical evidence, both ancient and modern, establishes that Afghans are the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. The same is true of the people of Kashmir, whose descent can be traced back to the tribes of Israel as has been mentioned in some of the quotations reproduced above. The Kashmiris also claim to be Bani Israel (that is, Children of Israel) and call themselves Kashar which is a Hebrew word meaning right. But let us probe further into this claim and examine what historical and other evidence is available to substantiate it.

The first three early historians of Kashmir, namely Mulla Nadiri (1378-1416) in his book *Tarikh Kashmir* (History of Kashmire), Mulla Ahmad in his book *Waqaya-i-Kashmir* (Events of Kashmir), and Abdul Qadar Bin Qazi-ul-Quzat Wasil Ali Khan in his book *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*, have all categorically stated that the inhabitants of Kashmir were the descendants of Israel. The last mentioned author adding that they had come from the Holy Land.

Apart from these three Muslim historians of Kashmir, Hindu scholars like Pandit Narain Kaul in his book *Guldasta-i-Kashmir* and Pandit Ram Chand Kak in his work Ancient Monument of Kashmir describe Kashmiris as being of Jewish countenance and descent.

Pandit Jawaher Lal Nehru, ex-Prime Minister of India and an eminent scholar of history in his book *Glimpses of World History* writes:

> All over Central Asia, in Kashmir and Laddakh and Tibet and even farther North, there is still a strong belief that Jesus or Isa travelled about there.

Francis Bernier (a courtier at the Court of Emperor Aurang Zeb) states that the inhabitants of Kashmir struck him as resembling

Jews, having the countenances and manners of the Israeli people.

S. Manoutchi, a physician in the service of Emperor Aurang Zeb, corroborates Francis Bernier and states:

> although . . . we find no remains in Kashmir of the Jewish religion, there are s.everal vestiges of a race descended from the Israelites.

George Foster in his famous work *Letters on a Journey from Bengal to England, 1973*, writes:

> On first seeing the Kashmirians in their own country, I imagined from their garb, the cast of their countenances, which were long and of a grave aspect, and the forms of their beards, that I had come among a nation of Jews.

The Rev. Claudius Buchanan talks about the discovery of an ancient manuscript of Moses in Hebrew which was written on a roll of leather 48 feet in length and about which he was told that it was brought from Kashmir.

The Kashmiri pundits claim that they had come from Persia and beyond and that some of their people had settled on the Malabar Coast. Mr. Henry Wilson in his book *Travels in Himalayan Provinces* writes:

> ... the physical and the ethnical character, which so sharply marks off the Kashmiris from all surrounding races, has always struck observing visitors to the valley and they have universally connected them with the Jews.

Major H. W. Bellew in his book *Kashmir in Kashgar* refers to the dress of Kashmiri men and women and their features and infers from these and other facts their descent from the Jews.

Similarly, Mr. Cowley Lambert in his book *A Trip to Kashmir and Ladakh* refers to the physical appearance of the Kashmiris and concludes that they have a most unmistakable Jewish cast of face.

Similarly, Mr. James Milne in his book *The Road to Kashmir* states that the three races (Afghans, Afridis and Kashmiris) have large aquiline features and skins which have been well described as subdued Jews.

More recently, Sir Francis Younghusband, who for many years was the British Representative in Kashmir, writes:

> Here may be seen fine old patriarchal types, just as we picture to ourselves the Israelitish heroes of old. Some, indeed, say . . . that these Kashmiris are the lost tribes of Israel and certainly as I have already said, there are real biblical types to be seen everywhere in Kashmir and especially among the upland villages. Here the Israelitish shepherd tending his flocks and herds may any day be seen.

We also find a Christian missionary who lived in Kashmir for many years (C. E. Tyndale Biscoe) who concedes:

> ... the Kashmiris belong to the lost tribes of Israel as many of them have such Jewish noses, also their love of money and of getting the better of their neighbours is a strong one.

Mr. John Noel in an article in Asia Magazine in 1930 under the title *The Heavenly High Snow Peaks of Kashmir* writes about Kashmiris as follows:

> They seem more perfectly Jewish than the purest Jews you have ever seen; not because they wear a flowing cloaklike dress that conforms to your idea of biblical garments, but because their faces have the

> Jewish cast of features. The curious coincidence-or is it a coincidence?-is that there is a strong tradition in Kashmir of its connection with the Jews. A recent Indian writer, Mr. V. Rangacharya, in his *History of Pre-Moslem India* describes the inhabitants of Kashmir to the North West Frontier of Kashmir to be 'very Jewish'.

Here then, we have an overwhelming accumulation of historical evidence emanating from a large number of independent and objective scholars, from different countries, belonging to different religions, all asserting the close connection of the Kashmiris to their Israeli descent. The evidence is visible in ethnic features, which no one can concoct or fabricate, in the dress which they wear, in names of persons which they carry, in names of places where they live-indeed, an all permeating reflection of their origin and past. When this large volume of evidence is seen in the context of what the Holy Quran and the Scriptures contain on the subject one is left with the conclusion that the lost tribes of Israel did settle primarily in the area now known as Afghanistan and Kashmir and some parts of India, like Bombay and the Malabar Coast.

We have the evidence of the Holy Quran and the Scriptures. We have also the evidence of eminent writers and historians, both ancient and modern, on the migration and the settlement of the lost tribes of Israel in new lands away from their original home. In search of facts and truth, however, let us see if there is other evidence available on this subject.

Now it is a well known historical fact that migrating people carry with them their customs, their traditions and, sometimes, even the names of places of their original homeland. The names get

distorted, and customs undergo some change, in new environment, or by passage of time, but nevertheless they retain sufficient traces of their origin. By itself this type of evidence may not be sufficient to categorically establish a particular proposition, but at the same time it cannot be disregarded as irrelevant or of no value. I reproduce below a few names of tribes and places in Kashmir, Afghanistan, in North-western parts of present Pakistan, in Gilgit, Ladakh areas which bear strong resemblance to biblical names and betray their lsraeli origin.

These names are either replicas of biblical names or bear strong and close resemblance to them. The small deviations are both a product of time and change of language and some distortion. No one can travel even a short distance in these countries without coming across a member of a tribe or name of a place or a monument which historically takes him back to the biblical period.

Khwaja Nazir Ahmad in his book *Jesus In Heaven on Earth* has in fact listed some 405 such names in Afghanistan, Kashmir and parts of Pakistan and India which show strong similarities and common origin with biblical names and those interested can have recourse to this valuable piece of research.

The strong linguistic evidence is further fortified by and reflected in customs and habits which, despite the passage of centuries and change of religion, have persisted. Both Afghanistan and Kashmir observe customs, and practice ceremonies on births, burials, funerals, marriages, eating habits and on festivals which establish similarities with those of the Jews. A detailed collection of them is also available in the book to which I have just referred.

Again, the common heritage and ancestry is reflected in the structure of the Kashmiri boats and the heart-shaped oars

commonly used to paddle them. Major T. R. Swinburne in his book *A Holiday in the Happy Valley*, on this unusual evidence alone, connects the Kashmiris with the lost tribes of Israel. Again, all three peoples name their sub-tribes after various animals and practice methods of irrigation of which the origin can be traced back to the Israelites and Egypt.

The evidence of common ancestry and heritage is also to be found embedded deeper even in traditions, folklore and fables which resound with stories of Jewish flavor and origin. There is a well in Afghanistan and also in Kashmir called Chahi Babal, that is the Well of Babylon, associated with angels like Harut and Marut.

Archaeological discoveries also point in the same direction of common ancestry and the pottery found in Afghanistan and Kashmir bears close resemblance to that found in Babylon and associated with the Jews.

The old monuments in Kashmir tell the same story. The ancient temples in Kashmir have little in common with Buddhist or Brahmanical architecture and have more affinity with the Jewish synagogues and pediments of Syrian origin. G. T. Virne in his book *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardoo* raised the question whether the Kashmiri temples had not been built by Jewish architects, Similarly, Dr. James Fergusson, an authority on Indian and Eastern architecture, notes as a point of interest that temples in Kashmir reproduce, in plan at least, the Jewish temple more nearly than any other known building.

There is also the famous Takhte Sulaiman in Srinagar which is associated in Kashmiri tradition with the visit of King Solomon and is described as an exact replica of the throne of Absalom, the third son of David, in the Woods of Ephraim not far from Jerusalem.

The mass of evidence on the settlement of the lost tribes of Israel in Kashmir, Afghanistan and the surrounding lands is indeed formidable. It is to be found in religious books, in books of history and research by ancient and modern writers belonging to different countries and different faiths. The adherents of these faiths violently disagree on many fundamentals of life and faith but reveal a rare unanimity and consensus on the descent of the Afghans and the Kashmiris from the ancient Israeli stock.

The evidence is indeed all permeating. It is reflected in their distinctive features, in language, in names, in dress, in customs, in traditions, in folklore, in pottery, in architecture, in monuments -in fact in every conceivable aspect of human life and activity. It is difficult to reject or ignore this mass of evidence in the absence of strong reasons and at least a semblance of evidence to the contrary.

The proclaimed mission of Jesus was to seek, preach to and save the lost tribes of Israel. Following his escape from the cross and sensing danger in staying at the place of his persecution, we find him travelling in disguise to Damascas through Judea, Samaria, Nazareth and to the Sea of Tiberius in search of the lost tribes. The place where Jesus first stayed for a time about two miles from Damascas is even to this day known as *Maqam-i-Isa* (which means the resting or halting place of Jesus). This place was originally called Rabwah.

Mir Muhammad bin Khawand Shah Ibn-i-Muhammad wrote in his famous book *Rauza-tus-Safa fi Sirat-ul-Ambia wal Muluk wal Khulafa* (The Gardens of Purity concerning the biography of the Prophets and Kings and Caliphs) that the Jews turned Jesus out of the city and Jesus and Mary set out and went to Syria. From Syria Jesus travelled to Mosul and then to Aleppo.

It is stated that during this journey Jesus travelled incognito under the name of Yuz Asaf, the word Yuz stands for Yusu (meaning Jesus) and Asaf in Hebrew means gatherer, namely, one who was to collect the lost sheep of Israel.

We next hear of Jesus in Iran. It is said that Yuz Asaf came to this country from the West and preached there and many believed in him. The sayings of Yuz Asaf as recorded in Iranian traditions are similar to those of Jesus. (Agha Mustafai, Ahwali Ahalian-i-Paras, 219).

We can then trace Jesus in Afghanistan: In Ghazni (Western Afghanistan) and in Jalalabad (in the extreme south-east of Afghanistan) there are two platforms which bear the name of Yuz Asaf: for he sat and preached there.

We then find a quotation from Acta Thomae which records the presence of Jesus and Thomas at Taxila.

Jesus, his mother Mary, and Thomas proceeded towards Murree. Mary died there and was buried at a hill top known as Pindit-Point. The town Murree was until 1875 called Mari and, was named after her. Her tomb adjoining the Defence Tower, is even today called: *Mai Mari da Asthan*-the resting place of Mother Mary.

We can almost with certainty trace the entry of Jesus into Kashmir through a valley called Yusu Margh, which is named after him and where the race of Yadu (Jews) is still to be found. It lies on the bridle route followed by merchants, coming, generally on foot, from Kaghan and Afghanistan. The Kaghan valley on one side touches Kashmir and on the other the Murree hills. Aish Muqam (about 47 miles from Srinagar) is not far from Yusu Marg. In fact it lies on the same route. Aish or Ashush is a perversion of Issa (Jesus).

There is another significant fact which, more than anything else,

proves that Jesus did come to Kashmir. I give below a few names known to Kashmir history and geography:

> Aish Muqam, Kal-Issa, Yusu-marg, Arya-Issa, Ram-Issa Yusu, Yusu-nag, Issa-Brari, Yusu-dha, Yusu-mangala, Issa-eil, Yusu-dhara, Yusu-varman, Issa Kush, Yusu-gam, Yusu-para, Issa Mati, Yusu-hatpura, Yusu-raja, J-yes-Issa, Yusu-kun, J-yes-th-Issa-vara, and Yusu-maidan.

We have traced the life of Jesus from his escape on the cross to his travel and abode in the mountains of Afghanistan and the Vale of Kashmir in a successful search of the lost tribes of Israel and in fulfilment of his proclaimed Divine mission. Another decisive piece of evidence in support of this is provided by the discovery of his tomb in Mohalla Khaniyar in Srinagar. It is called Rauzabal and is described as the tomb of Yuz Asaf, the prophet, who is also styled as *Shahzada Nabi* (the Prince Prophet). This discovery and revelation was made by the Promised Messiah through Divine guidance and research. Here again we find strong evidence in support of his proclamation. We find a description of the tomb in the book of the British Resident in Kashmir (Sir Francis Younghusband):

> There resided in Kashmir some 1,900 years ago a saint of the name of Yuz Asaf, who preached in parables and used many of the same parables as Christ uses, as, for instance, the parable of the sower. His tomb is in Srinagar ... and the theory is that Yuz Asaf and Jesus are one and the same person. When the people are in appearance of such a decided Jewish cast, is it curious that such a theory should exist.

Captain C. N. Enrique in his book *The Realms of God* says.:

> During my stay in Srinagar I came upon curious

traditions concerning some of the tombs in the city. There is one tomb said to be that of Christ.

Sheikh Al-Said-us-Sadiq, who lived in the third and fourth centuries of the Muslim era, and who wrote over 300 books, writes as follows:

> Then Yuz Asaf, after roaming about in many cities, reached that country which is called Kashmir. He travelled in it far and wide and stayed there and spent his (remaining) life there, until death overtook him, and he left the earthly body and was elevated towards the Light. But, before his death he sent for a of his, *Ba'bad* (Thomas) by name, who used to serve him and was well-versed in all matters. He (Yuz Asaf) expressed his last will to him and said: My time for departing from this world has come. Carry on your duties properly and turn not back from truth, and say your prayers regularly. He then directed *Ba'bad* (Thomas) to prepare a tomb over him (at the very place he died). He then stretched his legs towards the West and head towards the East and died. May God bless him.

Abdul Qadir bin Qaziul-Quzat Wasil Ali Khan writes in his book *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*:

> ...the tomb is described by the people of the location to be that of a prophet of the people of the book which words are generally applied to Christians.

Mulla Nadiri, the first Muslim historian of Kashmir, writes about Takhte Sulaiman:

> ... on the other stone of the stairs (of this temple) he also inscribed that he (Yuz Asaf) was Yusu, Prophet of the Children of Israel.

There are some other inscriptions in Persian Sulus Script in the temple Takhte Sulaiman on the flank walls encasing the staircase. One of them says: At this time Yuz Asaf proclaimed his prophethood, year fifty and four; and the other says: He is Jesus, Prophet of the Children of Israel.

The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, declared nearly 1400 years ago that Christianity would not decline nor would its progress -be retarded until the Promised Messiah, at whose hands the cross was destined to be smashed, appeared in the world. This prophecy indicated that in the time of the Promised Messiah such discoveries would be made as would throw light on the Christian doctrine of crucifixion and ascension which would be discarded in the face of overwhelming evidence from the Scriptures, medical research and other discoveries. This time has arrived. It is happening. Like the first night's moon all cannot see it but for how long? The accumulated and entrenched prejudices and misconceptions nourished and held for nearly 2,000 years have begun to be dissipated. Indeed, truth is beginning to assert its slow but undeniable and inevitable claim to recognition. Look at the storm which greeted the Promised Messiah's writing on this subject some 80 years ago. Look how much of what he revealed then to a hostile world is quietly accepted today. The rest, too, is bound to be acknowledged as the knowledge spreads and the barriers of prejudice and pre-conceived notions tumble down in the face of new discoveries and the truth. Then nations the world over will begin to acknowledge the truth and the ground will be cleared to lay the foundation of a new world order which will free humanity from its present costly conflicts and acrimonious dissensions which so hamper the attainment of the purpose of human creation.

Let me conclude my address with certain prophetic words from the Promised Messiah in his book *Tazkiratushshahadatain*.

> The third century from this day shall not pass until all those who look for the descent of Jesus from heaven, Christians or Muslims, will despair of it and will forsake the false beliefs now so fondly cherished by them. Then there will be one religion in the world and one leader. I have been sent to sow a seed and I have sown it. It will now grow and bear flowers and fruit in due season and there is none who can uproot it.

ANDREAS FABER-KAISER

Andreas Faber-Kaiser is a philosopher and scholar of comparative religion. He first became intrigued by the Kashmir connection when he heard of Jesus' tomb in Kashmir. He made enquiries and finally decided to go himself to Kashmir to investigate. Gradually he pieced together an impressive dossier which fills a number of Biblical lacunae which have perplexed scholars for hundreds of years.

The result of his researches was published under the title *Jesus Died in Kashmir*. Mr. Faber-Kaiser lives in Spain.

He Did Not Die on The Cross
by Andreas Faber-Kaiser

I am taking part in this congress in an attempt to provide proof! -which in any case are already known-for the hypothesis that Jesus did not die as a result of the injuries he received during his crucifixion. This circumstance has still to be demonstrated in order to lend initial credence to the hypothesis which points to the life and natural death of Jesus in Kashmir.

In the first place, we have to consider the fact that Jesus did not remain crucified for many hours. He was taken down from the cross on the evening of the same day on which the sentence was pronounced and carried out.

Jesus was crucified on a Friday. Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath. This circumstance made it necessary to bring down the body of Jesus before nightfall, because the Jewish day began at nightfall and the week began from Friday night onwards. According to Jewish law, it was forbidden to leave a condemned man on the cross during the sacred day of the Sabbath.

I emphasize the fact that Jesus only remained on the cross for a few hours because it was possible to live for several days in this horrible condition. The true purpose of crucifixion was not to cause immediate death, on the contrary it was a torture which continued for three or four days,. Death only occurred from hunger and thirst, inclement weather (cold and heat) or from attack by birds of prey or other beasts. Sometimes death was accelerated by breaking the legs of criminals. It could also happen

that after a few hours, or on the day after the crucifixion, it was considered that the criminal had suffered sufficient punishment by being lifted on the cross, in which case he was taken down from it and allowed to continue living. With regard to this, it should be noted that if a crucified man was taken down from the cross in time and given careful treatment, he generally recovered and survived.

Now consider the fact that Jesus was crucified with two male factors All three were therefore suffering the same punishment.

But it happened that at the time when they were brought down from the cross at the same time as Jesus, the two robbers were still alive, and the Roman soldiers therefore broke their legs so that they would finish dying. It is unlikely that Jesus, having suffered the same punishment, had already died. Only a few moments before, Jesus still had sufficient strength to shout in a loud voice.

Another point to consider is that Pilate, who knew from experience how long a person took to die on the cross, was surprised that Jesus had already died.

It is also a well known fact that when the Roman centurion tried to see whether Jesus was dead by wounding him in the side with his spear, water and blood flowed from the wound. But only a few drops of thick blood would flow from a dead body.

Having reached this point, it is interesting to cast a brief glance at the recent analysis of the so-called Shroud of Turin.

From 1969 onwards a Swiss professor, a specialist in criminology, subjected the Holy Shroud to a scientific analysis called palynology, which studies the pollen of plants which has adhered to cloth. After two years of pain-staking study Professor Max Frei of Zurich declared that as a member of the Scientific Committee given the

task of making new analyses of the linen using every modern method, he had noted the existence of a minute layer of a special dust of unknown origin. He succeeded in obtaining permission to make an analysis on a sample, the results of which were as follows: It was found that they were minute grains of fossilized pollen of plants which existed only in Palestine twenty centuries ago. There was no doubt in his mind: the Shroud of Turin was genuine. This was affirmed not by some unknown person, but by a criminologist of world-wide reputation, who is the director of the Zurich Police Scientific Laboratory, has a degree in Biology and Natural Sciences and speaks several languages; he stated that the pollen was analysed first under the microscope and then by a method called palynology, based on the structure of the pollen and its geographical and paleobotanical distribution in the form of microfossils, comparatively, and he discovered that the plant came from the Palestine area. Then there were typical signs of plants from the area of Constantinople, where the shroud was exhibited from the year 438 onwards. After that, Mediterranean dusts of the 14th and 15th centuries; to be precise there is pollen from six plants from Palestine, one from Constantinople and up to eight from the Mediterranean area.

Summarizing the results of the investigations begun in 1969 at the request of the Church, a communique was issued at the beginning of 1976, the text of which is as follows:

> After seven years of investigations on the shroud in which his body was wrapped, various scientists have reached the conclusion that Jesus Christ was buried alive. The experts confirm that the body of a crucified man lay in the Holy Shroud which is preserved at Turin, and that this man suffered exactly the same passion as did Christ, but that he did not die on the

> cross but was buried alive. The twenty-eight blood stains on the shroud support this theory. It would be scientifically impossible for a dead body to bleed in the way in which the body wrapped in the shroud bled, state the investigators. In the opinion of the latter it is a clear and unmistakable scientific fact that he was buried alive, unless there was a second Jesus and this second Jesus suffered the same passion as he did.

Recalling some points in the history of the so-called Shroud of Turin, we find that it was said to have been in Jerusalem in the 9th and 11th centuries, and was in Constantinople in the 12th century. Various historians place it in France in the 14th century.

After a brief sojourn in Belgium in the second half of the 14th century, it passed into the ownership of the House of Savoy from 1474 onwards. It was slightly damaged in a fire in 1532, and three years later was transferred to Turin. From 1536 to 1578 it travelled successively from Vercelli to Milan, from there to Nice, then again to Vercelli, Chambery, to return once more to Turin in 1706. In the same year it was transferred for a brief period of time to Genoa, then returned for final safe-keeping to Turin.

Humberto II of Savoy, after a referendum held in 1946, entrusted it to the safe custody of the Archbishop of Turin, without renouncing ownership of the linen cloth.

The first photographs of the cloth were taken in 1898. But the official photographs of it were taken in 1931 by G. Enrie. Serious studies on the cloth were begun from that year onward.

It is 1 metre 10 centimetres wide and 4 metres 36 centimetres long. According to Mr. Ricci, an expert on the objects owned by the Vatican, a detailed analysis of the imprints left by the body on the shroud indicate that Jesus measured 1.62 metres. But the

sculptor Professor Lorenzo Ferri of Rome estimates that the stature of the body wrapped in the shroud was 1.87 metres.

In 1957 the book *Jesus nicht am Kreuz gestorben* (Jesus did not die on the cross), by Kurt Berna, appeared. Kurt Berna is a Catholic author and secretary of the German institute of investigations on the Holy Shroud at Stuttgart. This institute, under the direction of Berna, conducted some important studies on the subject of the shroud after the photographs of Enrie were published. The conclusions from these investigations were published by Kurt Berna in two books, one called *Das Linen* (The Linen Cloth), and the other *Jesus nicht am Kreuz gestorben*, already mentioned. The revelations in these books, especially the second, in which it was shown that Jesus did not die on the cross, caused a sensation which was only to be expected at the time, and they became the object of polemics and criticisms, some of them favourable and the others absolutely opposed to this theory.

On the 26th of February 1959 Kurt Berna sent a letter to Pope John XXIII, calling for his permission to allow a committee of medical and scientific experts to investigate the whole matter of the shroud of Turin, so that the various controversies aroused by it could be settled once and for all. The reply from the Vatican was in the negative. But ten years later, in 1969, the Vatican gave permission for such a committee to be set up, and as we have already seen they came precisely to the conclusion that Jesus did not die on the cross.

I will now mention some of the conclusions arrived at by Kurt Berna in the book in question.

Kurt Berna states that the analysis of the linen cloth shows that the head and hands of Jesus were resting at a higher level than the rest of the body, and he concludes that if the body concerned

were dead, fresh blood could not have flowed from these organs and left their imprints on the cloth.

Furthermore, he declares, the cloth shows signs of blood which flowed from the wounds in the head of Jesus caused by the thorns of the crown put on him by the Romans as a jest in mockery of his title King of the Jews. Kurt Berna concludes that when the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross and the crown of thorns removed from his head, the wounds caused by the thorns began to bleed. If Jesus had already been dead for some time, all the blood would have flowed down to the lower regions of the body and coagulated there. It is a law of nature that the circulation of the blood takes place in completely airless conditions, and this circulation is always caused by the pumping action of the heart. In a recently dead body, after the heart has stopped beating, not only does the blood cease to flow from wounds after a certain time, but the blood itself begins to shrink within the veins. The blood drains out of the capillaries below the surface of the skin, producing the pallid appearance of death in the corpse. Therefore no fresh blood could flow from the wounds made by the thorns unless the heart was pumping, even slowly. From the medical point of view, Jesus was not dead at that moment.

It is true that under certain conditions a pallid appearance similar to that of death may appear, and the person in question may appear to be actually dead when respiration has apparently ceased, but in such cases the heart need not necessarily have stopped beating. Respiration may cease after asphyxia caused by gas or by being temporarily buried in sand; but if proper medical attention is given to the individual in question immediately after the accident, and if the heart has not yet stopped beating, his life may well be saved.

Furthermore, the blood-stains on the cloth show a trickle of

blood, running along the line of the right arm, which has oozed from the wound caused by the nail in the right wrist of Jesus. This indicates-since the blood is fresh and has therefore soaked into the linen-that sufficient fresh blood flowed from this wound during the act of unnailing the body of Jesus from the cross, at which moment the right arm, having been unnailed before the left, hung down vertically and caused a trickle of blood to flow along the line of the arm. This bleeding during the descent from the cross indicates clearly that the heart was beating in Jesus' body during that moment.

Kurt Berna then analyses the wound caused by the spear of the Roman soldier who was testing to see whether Jesus was really dead.

On the right side of the thorax can be seen the mark of the wound caused by the spear of the Roman soldier as it penetrated.

High up on the left side of the thorax can be seen the wound caused by the point of the spear as it came out of the body.

These two wounds show the angle at which the point of the spear passed through Jesus' thorax. If a horizontal line is drawn towards the left side of the body starting from the wound made by the spear as it entered, the angle at which the latter moved when entering the body (with reference to the wound made as it came out) is 29°. As the spear entered between the fifth and sixth ribs, the straight line traced in this way by the spear passes well above the heart of Jesus, so that it was not damaged or even grazed by the spear of the Roman soldier.

The reason why Kurt Berna places so much emphasis on the fact that the spear did not reach the heart of Jesus stems from the fact that, according to the gospel of St. John, "blood and water" flowed from the wound. Since the fact that blood flows from

a body indicates that it is alive, Christian historians and priests found themselves obliged to prove that the point of the spear had penetrated an inner chamber of the heart in which blood had accumulated, and that this was the blood which flowed from the wound. However, Kurt Berna demonstrates that the heart had not been touched by the spear and that the reason why the blood flowed from the wound was that the heart was still beating (even if only slightly) and that therefore Jesus was still alive.

At a later date, last year to be more precise, recent scientific investigations were disclosed which showed that the linen cloth of Turin, apart from being genuine as a burial cloth, really was wrapped round Jesus and not round some other anonymous corpse of one of the innumerable persons who were executed during that period in a similar (but not the same) manner as Jesus. Any possible doubt existing with regard to the authenticity of the shroud was removed in the most scientific way possible by the computer previously used to analyze the photographs sent from Mars by the Viking probes. In an analytical breakdown of an ultra-violet photograph of the shroud, taken in 1969 by Giovan Battista Judica Cordiglia, the computer at the laboratory of Pasadena accurately reconstructed the weft of the cloth, and its pattern was found to be identical with that used at the time when Christ was crucified. It also revealed the presence of organic substances in the linen, such as: blood, saliva, sweat, myrrh, aloes, fossilized pollen of eleven different species, six of which were identified as coming from plants now extinct, but which existed in Palestine 2000 years ago.

In this way, science proved definitely that the Holy Shroud is genuine in its claim to be a burial cloth and not the result of the work of some anonymous painter of the Middle Ages.

Nor does any doubt remain as to the fact that the image traced on the cloth is that of Jesus: the marks left by the crown of thorns, the semi-coagulated blood on the middle thorax, flowing from the wound caused by the point of a spear, the multiple wounds caused by scourging, the holes made by the nails in the wrists and feet, and the significant appearance of the legs of the victim, which shows that they were not broken as was usually done in the case of others condemned to crucifixion.

The most important discovery made by the group of American specialists was that the images discernible on the linen cloth of Turin were not caused by direct contact with the body of Jesus, but by a strange radiation-of hitherto unknown originating from the body of Jesus.

I am now going to refer once more to the Bible to see how the events following the crucifixion also tend to present us with the image of a living flesh-and-blood Jesus, and not a spiritual or divine being.

Once Jesus was taken down from the cross, still alive as we have seen, a series of events took place which indicate that an attempt was made to heal him, and that he also came out of his sepulchre alive. It is appropriate at this point to recall the sympathy displayed by Pilate towards Jesus.

In the first place it should be noted that Jesus was delivered not to his enemies but to people who were his friends.

It is curious to note that Jesus was taken to a tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea, and that this tomb was not filled with earth, according to the custom of the Jews, but was only closed by a large stone or rock. It was a spacious tomb in which there was enough air to breathe. It is also curious to note that in order

to leave the tomb Jesus had to move aside the rock which was blocking the entrance. This indicates that a physical human body came out from it, and not a spiritual or divine being, who would go before his disciples on the road to Galilee.

Furthermore, the statement that Mary Magdalene, Mary and Salome went into the sepulchre indicates how spacious it was. There is also evidence to suggest that Jesus was cured of his wounds by Nicodemus. Nicodemus applied an ointment which healed the wounds and improved the circulation of the blood. The ointment applied by Nicodemus to Jesus is known by the name of *Marham-I-Isa* (the ointment of Jesus) or *Marham-I-Rasul* (the ointment of the prophet), an ointment which is mentioned in many Eastern medical treatises, many of which claim also that it was the ointment applied to the wounds of Jesus when he was taken down from the cross.

We will see now how Jesus, with his wounds healed and having left the sepulchre, fled in order to escape his enemies, thus beginning a new stage in his human life. The Bible will also show us that the image of Jesus, seen after he left the sepulchre, is the image of a physical human body, and not the image of a divine or spiritual being.

We saw previously that Jesus did not leave his sepulchre by supernatural means, but that the rock covering its entrance had to be moved away to enable him to leave. This means that the body concerned was a physical body which needed a physical space through which to pass. Later, Jesus talks to his disciples, goes to Galilee, eats bread and fish, shows the wounds in his body, escapes secretly from the jurisdiction of Pilate, emigrates from this place as is customary amongst the prophets, and travels to the East.

After leaving the sepulchre, Jesus first met with Mary Magdalene and her companion, who kissed his feet-a sign that his body was physical-and Jesus instructed them to tell his disciples to go to Galilee, where they would meet with him.

Jesus was then seen by James and by Paul, and met his friends at sporadic intervals, not daring to be seen openly in public for fear that he might be recognized and taken by the Jews.

It is clear that Mary and her companion, in the midst of their joy at finding that Jesus was alive, were very fearful that he might be discovered. Jesus himself was aware of this and tried to comfort them.

Jesus then undertook a journey on foot of about 100 kilometres to travel into Galilee and thus throw his possible persecutors off the track.

But let us look at some more proofs that Jesus continued to live in his own earthly human body, and that he had not entered the world of the spirit. Thus, we read in the Gospel of St. Luke, when Jesus appeared to the apostles (Luke 24:37-39):

> But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.
> And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?
> Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

Two verses further on, Jesus unexpectedly shows signs of being hungry, which would be quite inconceivable in a divine or spiritual being.

And in the gospel of St. John we read how Thomas touched the

wounds of Jesus. This shows that what had appeared to them was a tangible flesh-and-blood body.

What remains quite clear-as a final conclusion-is that Jesus had to disappear from Palestine. As we have seen, he made some final contacts with his disciples, at sporadic intervals to avoid being discovered, and went on his way towards the East. He was, on all counts, a persecuted man. Persecuted, tortured and tormented, physically and mentally, he was incapable of withstanding a second encounter with his enemies. To avoid discovery, he even disguised himself during his last days spent in Palestine.

But quite apart from the fact that he was now forced to flee, Jesus had by any possible means to accomplish the mission on which he had been sent. If he had in fact died on the cross, Jesus would have failed in the task he had been given. I mean of course that Jesus could not die before he had sought out and saved the lost tribes of Israel. Therefore he had to go to the East. And so it was that he arrived in Kashmir. The final proof may perhaps lie in the underground crypt of Srinagar. I for my part will not cease until I succeed in entering it.

Salam alaikum.

F. M. HASSNAIN

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He is a visiting professor at the universities of Mazoya, Meijo and Aivhi in Japan where he lectures on Indian history and culture.

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His publications include Index of Records (9 volumes), Buddhist Kashmir, Hindu Kashmir, Muslim Kashmir, etc.

TOMB OF YUZ-ASAPH

by F. M. HassNain

Inside the Tomb, in the holy city of Srinagar, lie the remains of a Prophet who died 1900 years ago. His name is Yuz-Asaph. It means nothing to many people. But bare-footed pilgrims journey to this Tomb every day.

Raja Shali-wahin of Kashmir went to the mountains and at Wuyan near Srinagar, saw a dignified person of white complexion, wearing white robes. The Raja enquired his name. He replied that he was known as the Son of God and to have been born of a Virgin. The Raja felt amazed but the personage told him that he had told the truth and his mission was to purify the religion. On further enquiry, he said that he had proclaimed his ministry in a country across the river Indus and the people made him to suffer. He had preached love, truth and purity of heart and accordingly he was also known as Messiah.[1] The translation of the verses from an ancient Sanskrit work entitled BHAVISHYAMAHA-PURANA is as under:

> Shali-wahin (39-50 A.D.) who was the grandson of Bikrama Jit, took over the government. He defeated the attacking hordes of the Chinese, the Parthians, the Scythians and the Bactrians. He made a demarcation line between the territories of the Aryans and the *Mleechas* [2], ordering the latter to remain on the other

1 Bhavishya-Maha-Purana, verses 17-32

2 Mleechas is religious terminology in Hinduism and means the followers

side of the river Indus. One day, Shale-wahin went to the Himalayas and there, in the middle of the Hun country, the mighty king saw a dignified personality sitting near a mountain.

The Saint was fair of complexion and wore white garments. King Shale-wahin asked him who he was. The Saint replied:

I am known as the Son of God, born of a virgin.

When the king felt amazed at the reply, the Saint said:

I am the preacher of the *Mleecha* religion and follower of true principles.

When the King asked him what his religion was, he replied:

O, King! I come from a land far away, where there is no truth any more and evil knows no limits; I appeared there in the *Mleecha* country as Messiah. Through me the wicked and the guilty had to suffer and I also suffered at their hands.

The King requested him to further explain his teachings and the Saint said:

I teach love, truth and purity of heart. I ask human beings to serve the Lord, who is in the centre of the sun and the elements. And God and the Son are for ever.

The King returned after making his obeisance to the Saint. [3]

JESUS IN KASHMIR:

It was during the reign of Gopanada (A.D. 49-109) that

of religions other than Hinduism.

3 Bhavishya-Maha-Purana, verses 17-32

Yuz Asaph proclaimed his ministry in Kashmir and spent his later life in the valley. During the period, Sulaiman came for the repairs of a temple dedicated to Solomon. He got inscribed the following verses on the stone pillars of the temple:
Yuz-Asaph, the Yusu of the tribes of Israel, proclaimed his prophethood: Year 54. Yusu, of the tribes of Israel.

The translation of the relevant page of the Persian history is given below:
The King assumed the name of Gopanada and started his rule in the Valley of Kashmir. During his reign, many temples were built and repaired. He invited Sulaiman from Persia to get repairs done to the Throne of Solomon on the hill. The Hindus raised objections saying that as he was not a Hindu but followed other religion, he could not repair the sacred tomb.
During this period, Yuz-Asaph arrived from the Holy Land and proclaimed his prophethood in the Holy Valley. He absorbed himself in prayers day and night and was very pious and saintly. He called the people towards the words of God. Many became his disciples. The King requested him to bring the Hindus to the right path.
Sulaiman repaired the throne of Solomon and raised the four pillars with the following inscriptions:
Masons of these pillars are Bhisti Zargar Year 54, and Khawaja Rukun, the son of Mirjan; Yuz-Asaph proclaimed his prophethood: Year 54. Yusu, of the tribes of Israel.[4]
They came together unto him; the rich and the poor for blessings and guidance. He said unto them: Listen, I say unto you the words of wisdom and truth, so that you may be able to make distinction between right and wrong. Indeed this is the religion of those, unto whom the words of God came. Whosoever shall discard

4 Mulla Nadri: Tarikh-i-Kashmir, p.35.

righteousness shall not enter heaven. Therefore, I say unto you: Seek ye the King dom of heaven, rather than that of the world. Woe unto the seekers of the world, they shall perish. Death keeps no time, for the hour is come; And birds have no power over their shooters. Save Ye with faith and work. So long there is light, Ye travel; And safeguard your good deeds. Blessed are those who treat well: for they know they shall be treated in the same way. And shun worldly desires; And give up anger; and give up back-biting; And keep your hearts pure.[5]

PARABLE:

Yuz-Asaph spoke this parable to the people, saying:

> When a sower goes to sow, some seed falls aside and is eaten by birds; some seed falls on stray earth and some falls on rocky areas and withers away. Some seed falls on thorns and perishes. The seed which falls on fertile land grows and produces fruit.
>
> By sower I mean the wise;
>
> By seed I mean words of wisdom;
>
> By seed eaten up by birds I mean the unintelligent;
>
> By seed thrown on rocky areas I mean those who do not understand;
>
> By seed thrown on thorns I mean those who understand but fail to comply;
>
> By seed which grows and bears fruit I mean those who obey and follow.[6]

CRUCIFIXION:

Saint Isana lived at Ishbar on the banks of the Dal Lake in Srinagar, Kashmir. He was a Saint of great repute and his preachings were

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5 Shaikh Sadiq, Kamal-ud-Din, p.359.

6 Shaikh Sadiq, Kamal-ud-Din, p.327.

heard by all and he had many devotees. One of his chief disciples, Sandiman, was ordered to be imprisoned for ten years. After some time Sandiman was put on the cross. Saint Isana, came and saw three sentences written on the forehead of Sandiman:

> This man will lead a poor life;
> After ten years' imprisonment, he will be put on the cross;
> After resurrection, he shall be the King.[7]

Sandiman was put on the cross in a compound and the crowds witnessed his crucifixion. During night, fairies came and danced around his corpse. Saint Isana felt and sat near the site. On the third day, Sandiman became alive. People came to see him in amazement and offered him the throne of Kashmir. He refused to accept this offer. But the people refused to leave him and he accepted to be their king.

This extraordinary event of crucifixion, the only instance in the ancient history of Kashmir, deserves attention due to the reason that the incident of crucifixion of Jesus Christ has been repeated here. It is also a strange coincidence that Jesus is known as ISA in the East. As such, Isana of Kashmir, who is spoken of as a great saint, is no other personality than Jesus Christ. His disciple is put on the cross and he obtains resurrection at the hands of Isana. This Saint lived at Ishbar, meaning the place of Isa, which is still held in reverence by a section of the people of Kashmir.

This fact has been mentioned in various historical works of Kashmir.

SPIRIT OF GOD:

Jesus Christ was the Spirit of God who assumed the name of

7 Haider Malik. Chadura; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, II, 12-56 Hassan Shah; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, V.iiiF. 25 Kalhana; Rajtarangini. Trans.Stein V.I.2.II.

Yuz-Asaph of Kashmir.[8] This tradition has been inherited by the Muslims from the Hindus of ancient times, who also believed that Jesus came to Kashmir and settled here. Jesus disclosed his identity to the King of Kashmir when the latter paid a visit to him in about 48 A.D. He declared:

> I am known as the Son of God and born of a Virgin. As I have preached love, truth and purity of heart, I am called Messiah.[9]

THOMAS:

Thomas accompanied Jesus during his travels and is known as BADAD in Arabic literature. He followed Jesus to the sea of Tiberias, along with Simon and Peter.[10] He was a twin brother of Jesus Christ.[11] Both of them reached Nisibis[12] After reaching the basin of Indus, Thomas went towards the north-west of India and reached Attock. He supervised the building of a palace for the King Gondophernes in A.D. 49. He met Jesus Christ at the marriage feast of Abbnes, at Taxila.[13]

Due to invasion of the Kushans during the first century A.D. there occurred an upheaval in the north of India. Thomas along with Jesus and Mary left for safety towards Kashmir. Mary died at a place now known as Murree, where she was buried in a tomb, now known as the Tomb of Mother Mary. Thomas accompanied Jesus to Kashmir.

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8 Mulla Nadri, Tarikh-i-Kashmir p.69 Haidar Malik Chandurs; Tarikh-i-Kashmir. 11.12.56, Hassan Shah; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, V.iii.F.25.

9 Bhavishya-Maha-Purana, V. 17.32.

10 John, 21:1, 2.

11 Thile, Acta. Thomas, 94

12 Cureton, Ancient Syriac. Documents V.22.141. Burkett, Early Christians, p.155.

13 Smith, Early History of India, p.219 Acta. Thomas v.20.46.

Jesus Christ died at the ripe age of 120 years.[14] The burial ceremony was performed by Thomas in the Jewish style.[15] It was a great mourning day for the Kashmiris.

A big tomb was raised on his grave and it became a place of pilgrimage for all, whether rich or poor.[16] People came with offerings at the tomb and led prayers there.[17] Thomas, who had always devoted his life to the service of Jesus Christ, felt very much bereaved and left for Malabar to preach among the lost tribes there.[18] Thomas preached the Gospel to the people in South India where he established seven churches. He suffered martyrdom at Mylapore in Madras and is buried there.[19]

His disciples call themselves the Christians of St. Thomas and they solomnize only two rituals: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They do not believe in virgin birth.[20]

THE TOMB OF JESUS CHRIST

The tomb of Jesus Christ is situated in Anzimar, Khanyar, Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir; Srinagar, which means the city of the sun, is an ancient city. It is divided into two parts, i.e. the old city and the new city and the tomb is situated in the old city. The people of Kashmir call it Roza-Bal, meaning "the site of the honoured tomb" and declare that it is the tomb of Yuz-Asaph. This prophet came to Kashmir 1900 years ago and

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14 Kans-ul-Ammal, V.2. p.34

15 Shaikh Sadiq, Kamal-ud-Din, p.357

16 Decree of Rozabal, Srinagar, Kashmir

17 Ibid

18 Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras, v.2, p.391. Wukfred, Christian Religion in India, v.10, p.83

19 Salmond, The Writings of Hippoclytus, v.3, p.131. Assemani, Biblothica Orientalics v.3.1.590

20 Philip, The Thrid Four Conference, 25

preached in the parables of Christ.[21]

Popular local tradition connects it with the tomb of Jesus Christ.[22] Some say that it is the tomb of the Prophet of the people of the Book.[23]

Yuz-Asaph came as a messenger of God to the people of Kashmir. The tomb had a hole from which perfume came out.[24]

DECREE: 1194 A.H.

The Decree granted to the keeper of the tomb, dated 1461 A.D. by the Grand Mufti of Kashmir and other Muftis, declares that the tomb has two graves: one of the Prophet Yuz-Asaph, sent as prophet to the people of Kashmir during the reign of the King Gopadatta and the other a descendant of the prophet of Islam.[25]

The translation of the Decree is as under :

"THE SEAL OF THE JUSTICE OF ISLAM
MULLA FAZIL

1194-A.H.

In this Court of Justice: in the Department of Learning and piety of the Kingdom:

Present:

Rahman Mir son of Amir Mir, submits that:
the Kings, the nobles, the ministers, and the general public come from all directions of the Kingdom to pay their homage and offerings in cash and kind at the lofty and the holy shrine of Yuz-Asaph, the Prophet,

21 Younghusband, Kashmir, p.112.
22 Enrique, The Realms of the Gods, 25.
23 Abdul Qadir, Hasmat-i-Kashmir, p 68.
24 Ghulam Nabi, Wajeez-ul-Tawarikh, v.ii, p.279.
25 Decree dated 1194 A.H. (1461 A.D.)

may God bless him; Claims that:
He is the only absolute claimant, entitled to receive the offerings and utilize these, and no one else has any right whatsoever on these offerings;
Prays that:
A writ of injunction be granted to all those who interfere and all others be restrained from interfering with his rights. This Court after obtaining evidence comes to the conclusion as under :
It has been established that during the reign of Raja Gopadatta, who got built many-temples, and got repaired, especially, the Throne of Solomon on the hill of Solomon, Yuz-Asaph came to the Valley.
Prince by descent, he was pious and saintly and had given up earthly pursuits. He spent all his time in prayers, day and night, and spent his time in meditation.
The people of Kashmir, having become idolaters after the great flood of Noah, God Almighty sent Yuz-Asaph as prophet to the people of Kashmir. He proclaimed oneness of God till he passed away. Yuz-Asaph was buried in Khanyar on banks of the lake, and the shrine is known as Rozabal.
In the year 871 A.H. Syed Nasir-ud-Din, a descendant of Imam Musa-Raza was also buried beside the grave of Yuz-Asaph.

Orders:
Since the shrine is visited by the devotees, both high and common, and since the applicant, Rahman Mir is the hereditary custodian of the shrine, it is ordered that he is entitled to receive the offerings made at the

shrine and no one else shall have any right to such offerings.

Given under our hand, this 11th Jamad-as-Sani A.H., signed and sealed :
Mohammad Akbar, Raza Akbar, Khazir Mohammad and Hibib-Ullah, caretakers of the shrine."
The tomb of Jesus Christ is built in Jewish style of a sepulchre, with a room underground, with a small window.

The shrine is quite distinct from the Muslim shrines, which have Buddhist style of conic domes.

Nearby the grave is a stone slab, engraved with a footprint, bearing traces of crucifixion wounds; one foot impression has a small round hole and the other has a raised scar wound. May be these are the feet of Jesus Christ, which were washed by a woman with her tears and wiped with her hair and kissed with her lips:

> Seeth thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee: Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is given, the same loveth little.

B. A. Rafiq

Bashir Ahmad Rafiq is the Imam of the London Mosque, the first mosque established in London. He was born in 1931 in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. He graduated from the University of the Punjab in 1953 and then undertook a five year course at the Missionary Training College, Rabwah, Pakistan. This course included intensive and detailed study of comparative religion, contemporary religious movements, Islamic thought and jurispudence.

In 1959 he was assigned to the London Mosque as missionary and deputy Imam. In 1964 he was appointed Imam of the London Mosque, which is the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Britain. There are more than 10,000 adherents of the Movement throughout Britain. He served as Private Secretary to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III in 1971/1972.

Mr. Rafiq speaks a number of languages. He is the author of a number of books on various aspects of Islamic teaching. Shortly

after arrival in Britain he founded the Muslim Herald, a monthly journal now in its 18th year of publication, which is noted as a forum of Islamic thought.

Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross
Biblical Evidence
by B. A. Rafiq

THERE are three currents of thought regarding the event of the crucifixion of Jesus :

(a) The Jews and the Christians both hold that Jesus was put upon the cross and expired on the cross and thus suffered an accursed death. The Jews consider such death as proof that Jesus was a false prophet as according to their scriptures such death is accursed. For instance,

> And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is accursed of God. (Deut. 21:22, 23)

And again,

> . . . but that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God. (Deut. 13:5)

The Christians believe that Jesus submitted willingly to an accursed death so that he might thereby atone for the sins of mankind.

(b) A large majority of Orthodox Muslims altogether reject the death of Jesus upon the cross. According to them, Jesus was never put upon the cross. When the Jews conspired to seize Jesus so that he might be crucified, God Almighty invested another person with the appearance of Jesus who was seized by the Jews

and was crucified, while Jesus was raised by God bodily to heaven. (c) The Ahmadi Muslims believe that Jesus was put upon the cross but God Almighty so planned that he was removed from the Cross while he was still alive and was ministered unto and having recovered completely he departed from Judea in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He lived to a good old age and died and was buried in Kashmir. They base themselves upon the Holy Quran, the traditions of the Holy Prophet and the writings of the ancient divines. They also rely upon statements in the New Testament which establish beyond doubt that Jesus was put upon the cross but was delivered by God Almighty from death upon the cross and the designs of his enemies were thus frustrated.

As is indicated by the title of my address, I shall support my thesis with statements comprised in the New Testament and in the commentaries thereon. It is necessary, however, to state in this context, that we do not consider the books of the New Testament as infallible and binding upon us. They were compiled a long time after the event of the crucifixion and do not possess the status of revealed books. Even the authorship of some of them is in dispute. The words of Jesus himself have not been reproduced in them in their integrity. The method adopted by the ecclesiastical authorities for their selection also shows that these books were not considered as revealed. Besides, their statements sometimes contradict each other. By the time they were compiled the notion that Jesus had died on the cross had gained acceptance. Nevertheless any statements comprised in them which militate against the death of Jesus on the cross would furnish strong evidence that he did not die on the cross.

I would preface my address with a brief account of the last few days of the life of Jesus, preceding the event of the crucifixion,

from the Gospels so as to furnish my audience with some idea of the situation which confronted Jesus at the time.

The hostility of the Jews towards him was at its height in those days and they were seeking means of putting an end to his life as they did not consider him a true prophet. They were also incensed against him as he was constantly preaching against and rebuking them on account of the absurd practices and ceremonials to which they had become accustomed and castigated them for their hypocrisy which had become their second nature. Thus they were on the lookout for means which might bring about his ruin.

For instance:

As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard, and to provoke him to speak of many things, lying in wait for him, to catch at something he might say.

(Luke 11:53, 54)

At the time when Jesus taught in the temple at Jerusalem, Jewish leadership was striving in diverse ways to destroy him. For instance, on one occasion they contrived that some agents of the Roman Administration should be in attendance, posing as sympathisers of Jesus, when the Jews questioned him:

> They asked him: Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not? But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them : Show me a coin. Whose likeness and inscription has it? They said: Caesar's. He said to them: Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him by what he said, but marvelling at his

answer, they were silent. (Luke 20:21-26)

Under the influence of his teachings large numbers of people became inclined to believe in him, which seriously upset the Jewish priesthood and they conspired to arrest this tendency by sending their officers to seize Jesus as is written:

> The Pharisees heard the crowd thus muttering about him, and the chief priest and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. (John, 7:32)

But they were so affected by hearing Jesus that none of them dared to make a move against him.

A few days before the festival of Passover the Jewish priests came together in the house of the Chief Priest Caiaphas and began to cast about for means to seize Jesus by some trick and put an end to him. At last they contrived to win over Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, one of the disciples of Jesus, through bribery, who sold himself into their hands in return for a few pieces of silver. Matthew states that he went one day to the priests and asked them:

> What will you give me if I deliver him to you? And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.
>
> (Matthew, 26:14-16)

The Passover arrived and Jesus directed his disciples to arrange for the supper on that day. In the evening the twelve disciples sat with Jesus at table and ate with him. On that occasion Jesus prophesied:

> He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. (Matt. 26:21)

After supper Jesus proceeded to a place called Gethsemane. According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus appeared disturbed

and restless at the time. He directed the disciples to stay behind and occupy themselves in prayer and supplication while he advanced a short space ahead of them and fell down on his knees and began to pray. After a short while he came back and observed that the disciples were asleep. He addressed Peter:

> Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. (Mark, 14:37-38)

He then left them again and began to pray and returning after a short while, again found them asleep. The same happened a third time and he said to them:

> Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand. (Matthew, 26:45-46).
>
> While he thus admonished his disciples, Judas arrived with the officers of the Chief Priests and Pharisees and with a body of soldiers. Judas walked ahead of them. He advanced and identified Jesus by kissing him. The crowd advanced towards Jesus and seized him. The soldiers secured him and tied him up and took him to the house of Caiaphas, the Chief Priest.
>
> (John, 18: 12-14)

The father-in-law of the Chief Priest Caiaphas inquired from Jesus about his teachings, to whom he returned a wise answer. In the end Caiaphas asked him to tell them truly whether he was the Messiah, to which he replied:

> I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of

heaven. (Mark, 14:62)

Thereupon Caiaphas rent his clothes and said:

> Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision? And they all condemned him as deserving death. (Mark 14:63-64)

The night was now spent and morning was close. The Chief Priests and the leaders of the people determined upon the death of Jesus and made preparations to take him to Pilate, the Roman Governor.

Syria and Palestine were at that time under Roman domination and were divided into four provinces, each of them under a Roman Governor. The Governor of Judea was Pontius Pilate and the Governor of Galilee was Herod. The Roman Authorities did not intervene in the domestic disputes of the Jews but were most intolerant of the least movement directed against the Roman power. Thus when the Jews took Jesus for judgment to Pilate they preferred against him the charge:

> We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king.
> Pilate enquired from Jesus: Are you the King of Jews? to which he replied: You have said so. (Luke, 23:2-5)
> Pilate then asked Jesus some further questions to which he replied in detail. Thereafter Pilate came out before the Jews and said:
> I find no crime in him. (John, 18:39)
> but the multitude cried out:
> He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place. (Luke, 23:5)

According to Luke, Herod, the Governor of Galilee, was then

in Jerusalem. When Pilate found that Jesus was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod, who asked Jesus several questions to which he made no reply.

And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then arraying him in gorgeous apparel, he sent him back to Pilate. (Luke, 23:11)

The previous night, the wife of Pilate bad seen a terrible dream and when Jesus was presented before Pilate she sent a message unto her husband:

> Have nothing to do with this righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream.
>
> (Matthew, 27:19)

Thus Pilate did not desire to have upon his hands the blood of an innocent person. He, therefore, announced to the multitude:

> You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him, neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him; I will therefore chastise him and release him. (Luke, 23:14-16)

But the Jews would not be reconciled to anything less than death for Jesus. They protested and said:

> If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend; everyone who makes himself a king sets himself against Caesar. (John, 19:12)

Under this threat Pilate did not pursue his design but had recourse to another device in order to save Jesus. It was customary to release a capital offender on the occasion of the Passover. At that time a capital offender, Barabas, was in custody, and Pilate

enquired from the multitude:

> Which of the two do you want me to release for you? (Matthew, 27:21)

At the instigation of the Chief Priests and the Pharisees the multitude unanimously demanded the release of Barabas, whereupon Pilate enquired:

> Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ? They answered: Crucify him. (Matthew, 27:22)

When Pilate found that he could not have his own way:

> He took water and washed his hands before the crowds, saying: I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves. (Matthew, 27:24)

Thereafter:

> The soldiers of the Governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews. And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. (Matthew, 27:27-31)

This was Friday. the day of preparation for the Passover and it was about the sixth hour. The soldiers brought Jesus out of the Palace and placing his cross upon his shoulder, led him to the place called Golgotha, where the crosses were fixed in the earth, and, along with the two offenders who were also condemned to death, Jesus was put upon the cross with nails driven through his hands and feet. Under the orders of Pilate the soldiers wrote out: King of the Jews on a piece of paper and stuck it on the cross. Later in the afternoon Jesus cried out aloud:

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? (My Lord, my Lord, why hast Thou

forsaken me?) He then went into a swoon. Darkness spread over the land and the curtain of the temple was rent in two. In the evening Joseph of Arimathaea came to Pilate and with his permission took the body of Jesus from the cross and placed it in a sepulchre hewn out of the rock. On the third day, that is to say on Sunday morning, certain women arrived at the sepulchre with perfumes and found that the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre had been rolled away and there was no one inside the sepulchre. Thereafter, Jesus met his disciples several times in secret.

I shall now proceed to establish from the evidence of the New Testament that Jesus certainly did not die on the cross but had gone into a deep swoon, which the centurion on duty imagined was death. As Pilate had been opposed to the crucifixion of Jesus it is most likely that he leant himself to a plan to rescue Jesus from death, devised along with Joseph of Arimathaea, the physician Nicodemus, and other disciples of Jesus. Also, the legs of Jesus were not broken while the legs of the other two offenders were broken.

I shall now draw your attention to the statements in the books of the New Testament which taken together place it beyond doubt that Jesus did not suffer death upon the cross.

1. When the Jews demanded a sign from Jesus, his answer was:

> An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matthew, 12:39-40)

This reply of Jesus which he gave to the Pharisees is decisive on the question under discussion. Jesus declined to show them any

sign except the sign of Jonah. What was that sign? It was that in consequence of the opposition of his people Jonah was placed in a situation in which he had to spend three nights and three days in the belly of a whale. The reply of Jesus to the Pharisees meant that in consequence of the designs of his enemies he would have to spend a certain period of time in the heart of the earth. The sign was that as Jonah entered the belly of the whale alive and remained therein alive for a certain period and emerged therefrom alive and rejoind his people, in the same way Jesus would enter the earth alive and abide therein alive and emerge therefrom alive and would thereafter join his people.

This was the essence of the sign prophesied by Jesus, that he would be placed in a situation in which his life would be despaired of but that by Divine grace he would be preserved alive as a sign of his righteousness. He would enter the sepulchre alive and would remain therein alive and would emerge therefrom alive. Thereafter, as Jonah after emerging from the belly of the whale rejoined his people who accepted him and held him in great honour, so would Jesus after the event of the crucifixion meet his people who were scattered in diverse lands and they would listen to him and do him honour.

If the affirmations of the Christians are accepted that Jesus had died on the cross and had entered the sepulchre as a corpse and remained therein as a corpse and on the third day he was bestowed spiritual life, then how would this series of events constitute a sign like the sign of Jonah? Every one: who dies enters the earth as a corpse and remains therein a corpse. Besides, the sign was promised to the Jews and yet after his resurrection, which in effect was resuscitation, Jesus did not inform a single Jew that he had accepted death. If the Christian affirmation is accepted, the Jews

would be entitled to claim that no part of the prophecy made by Jesus was in fact fulfilled. But the truth is that, in accordance with the prophecy made by Jesus, God Almighty delivered him from the accursed death upon the cross and by blinging him down from the cross alive completely frustrated the design of the Jews.

2. The warning administered by God Almighty to Pilate through his wife just when he had taken his place on the judgment seat, was designed to inform Pilate that it was not God's design to let Jesus die upon the cross as is written:

> Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him: Have nothing to do with this righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream. (Matthew, 27:19)

This dream which God Almighty showed to Pilate's wife is positive proof that God had designed the deliverance of Jesus from death upon the cross. If, as is claimed by the Christians, the very mission of Jesus was to suffer death upon the cross for the redemption of mankind, then how is it that God Almighty showed a dream to Pilate's wife which ran counter to His own plan?

We have been told that while Jesus was still a child and Herod designed to destroy him, God Almighty alerted Joseph against Herod's design and Joseph took the child and its mother into Egypt. (Matthew, 2:13)

Thus as Joseph was alerted in his dream so that Jesus might be safeguarded against destruction at the instance of Herod, in the same way at a time when his enemies were promoting a project for his destruction, God Almighty informed Pilate's wife in a dream that Jesus was righteous and thereby intimated to Pilate that it was God's pleasure that this innocent one should be accounted blameless. But the Jews resisted all his efforts towards that end

and finally threatened him that they would complain against him to Caesar. He then handed Jesus over ostensibly to the Jews that they might crucify him. and yet had recourse to secret plans for his delivery from death.

(a) The day appointed for the trial of Jesus was the day of preparation of the Passover as is written:

> When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, and in Hebrew, **Gab'batha**. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. (John, 19:13-14)

(b) The day appointed for the crucifixion of Jesus was Friday which would be followed at sunset by the Sabbath, so that Jesus would not be left upon the cross for more than a few hours.

(c) The centurion whose duty it was to supervise the due carrying out of the crucifixion believed in the truth of Jesus, as is written:

> And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that he thus breathed his last, he said: Truly this man was the son of God. (Mark, 15: 39)

(d) Jesus spent only a few hours upon the cross, which period was not sufficient to bring about the death of a healthy young man. This was confirmed by the sudden outpouring of blood and water from his side when he was pricked with a spear. Pilate himself wondered whether the death of Jesus had occurred so speedily. Then the legs of Jesus were not broken as was customary, while the legs of the two thieves who were crucified along with him were broken.

(e) Though Pilate was not convinced that Jesus had died, he directed that his body be made over to Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, as is written:

> When it was evening, there came a rich man from

> Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.
>
> (Matthew, 27:58-59)

This is enough to convince any reasonable person that Pilate had recourse to every possible means to secure the deliverance of Jesus from death upon the cross.

3. It has been noted that Jesus took his disciples to the garden of Gethsemane and directed them to occupy themselves with prayer, but they went to sleep. Jesus himself prayed humbly, crying and weeping, in the following words:

> Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.
>
> (Luke, 22:42)

Jesus spent the greater part of the night in prayer and supplication. He was in agony and his perspiration fell from him like large drops of blood. (Luke, 22: 44)

The purport of the supplication of Jesus was that God Almighty might safeguard him against the death which his enemies had designed to inflict upon him, not that he shirked laying down his life in the cause of God, indeed he was ever ready to do so, but in order that the purpose of his enemies may be frustrated and that God's will in respect of the safeguarding of His Messenger may be fulfilled. This is the meaning of his supplication: Nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done. Had Jesus believed that his death upon the cross was in accord with God's design, he would certainly not have supplicated:

> Lord, everything is possible for Thee, do Thou remove this cup from me.

We believe that the prayer of Jesus was accepted and that the cup

of an accursed death was removed from him. Jesus claimed that God heard his prayers. He admonished his disciples:

> Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will. (Mark, 11:24)

Again:

> For everyone who asks receives, and to him who knocks it will be opened. For what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for fish, will give him a serpent. (Matthew, 7:8-10)

If we were to think that the supplication of Jesus which he made with crying and weeping and in extreme humility and agony was not heard, it would appear to have been meaningless for him to assure others that their prayers would be heard.

Jesus acknowledged that his prayers were heard as is written:

> And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: Father I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I know that Thou hearest me always. (John, 11:41, 42)

There is positive proof that his prayer was heard as he had desired and God saved him from death upon the cross as is written:

> In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared. (Hebrews, 5:7)

4. It is written:

> But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. (John, 19:34)

This shows clearly that Jesus was only unconscious at the time and had not died. It was assumed that he had expired, or his death was announced according to Pilate's plan in order to put

off the Jewish priesthood. It appears that a soldier who was not aware of Pilate's plan pierced the side of Jesus with a spear and blood and water poured out from his side. This is proof that he was alive at the time. A corpse does not bleed.

In the phrase: at once there came out blood and water, the expression at once is significant. It shows that the body of Jesus bled immediately on its being pierced. If blood drips from a corpse it does not flow but emerges slowly in the form of clots. In a dead body the action of the heart ceases altogether and the circulation of blood stops and it is not possible that blood should flow out. Therefore, the pouring out of blood of Jesus is clear proof that he was not dead at the time.

5. Crucifixion was a process entirely distinct from hanging. For the purpose of crucifixion, a wooden cross was prepared and the condemned person was nailed to the cross by his hands and feet. Death was the end of a slow process which was achieved in the course of three or four days, and sometimes took even longer. Even then when a condemned person was taken down from the cross his legs were broken in order to make sure that he had died. Sometimes the relatives of such a person contrived to obtain possession of his body while he was still alive and nursed him back to consciousness and thus rescued him from the jaws of death. The well-known author, B. F. Strauss, has written in this context:

> Crucifixion, they maintain, even if the feet as well as the hands are supposed to have been nailed, occasions but very little loss of blood. It kills, therefore, only very slowly by convulsions produced by the straining of the limbs or by gradual starvation. So, if Jesus, supposed indeed to be dead, had been taken down

> from the cross after about six hours, there is every probability of his supposed death having been only a death-like swoon, from which after the descent from the cross Jesus recovered again in the cool cavern, covered as he was with healing ointments and strongly scented spices. On this head, it is usual to appeal to an account in Josephus who says that on one occasion, when he was returning from a military recognisance on which he had been sent, he found several Jewish prisoners who had been crucified. He saw among them three acquaintances whom he begged Titus to give to him. They were immediately taken down and carefully attended to. One was really saved but the two others could not be recovered.
>
> (*A New Life of Jesus* by D. F. Strauss, Vol. I, page 410)

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, he was in good health and was a young man of 33 years. He remained upon the Cross for not more than six hours at the outside and probably for a much shorter period. This could not in itself have brought about his death. The two malefactors who had been put upon the cross along with him were taken down at the same time and as they were alive their bones were broken, as is written:

> Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.
>
> So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him.
>
> (John, 19:31, 32)

The demand of the Jews that the legs of those who had been

nailed to the cross should be broken is proof that they did not consider that the time spent by them upon the cross had been long enough to induce death.

When Pilate was told that Jesus had died he was surprised as is written:

> And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. (Mark, 15:44, 45)

John Fleetwood has written:

> Pilate was at first surprised at the request of Joseph; thinking it highly improbable that he should be dead in such a short time.
>
> (*People's Life of Jesus*, by John Fleetwood, D. D. page 333)

5a. Crucified felon was left on the cross and was not delivered to his kinsfolk. Mr. Haim Cohen has written:

> The Roman law was that a convict after execution, might not be buried. We have seen that the crucified, in particular, were left on the cross until beasts and birds of prey devoured them. Guards were mounted on duty to prevent kinsfolk or friends from taking down a corpse and burying it; unauthorised burial of a crucified convict was a criminal offence. The Emperor or his officers, might, exceptionally, grant kinsfolk or friends authorisation to bury the convict and what in Rome was the imperial prerogative was in provinces the right of the Governor.
>
> (*The Trial and Death of Jesus*, by Haim Cohen; page 238)

In the case of Jesus it is patent that the Jews were eager to destroy

him and desired to inflict the maximum amount of damage upon him. Pilate had been put in fear by them and they had coerced him into condemning him to crucifixion. It is, therefore, remarkable that he agreed so readily that the body of Jesus should be made over to Joseph of Arimathea contrary to the normal practice of leaving the body to be devoured by wild beasts etc. He was not quite convinced that Jesus had expired within so short a time and yet he did not direct that his bones should be broken. On the contrary he directed that the body of Jesus should be handed over to one of his disciples.

All this clearly indicates that Jesus had not died on the cross. There is no positive piece of evidence which could support the notion that he had so died. The statement of the centurion that he had died is no proof of death. He was not a physician and had made no particular examination of the body. He believed in the truth of Jesus which he affirmed in the words:

Truly this man was the son of God.

Of a surety the centurion was a party to Pilate's plan.

6. After the event of the crucifixion Jesus remained subject to all physical needs, such as hunger and thirst, like all other men. On the occasions when he met his disciples in secret he demanded food and ate in their company as is written:

> And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them: Have you anything here to eat? They gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate before them. (Luke, 24:41-43)

This is clear proof that he was subject to hunger and thirst like every one else and shows that he possessed the same physical body which had been hung upon the cross.

It is also written that he exhibited his wounded body to the

disciples so as to convince them that God had saved him from death on the Cross as is written:

> As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them. But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do questions rise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has no flesh and bones as you see that I have. (Luke 24:36-40)

7. Another factor that reinforces the contention that Jesus had been saved from death upon the cross is that after the event of the crucifixion he met only his disciples, and that in secret, and did not show himself to the common people. He did not go about in his normal dress so that he should not be identified.

He sent a message to his disciples that they should proceed to Galilee where he would meet them. He left Jerusalem in a hurry and walked all the way to Galilee by an indirect route. He had so disguised himself that his two disciples who met him on the road were not able to recognise him. He adopted all these precautions lest the Jews should identify him and seize him again and hang him once more on the cross.

Had Jesus possessed a resurrected body he could not have been seized by any one, nor could such a body have been crucified. There would thus have been no occasion to take precautions. In such case he should have appeared in his spiritual body before the Jews and should have demonstrated to them that though they had compassed his death upon the cross, he had been resurrected and had no longer any fear of them as they could not now seize him. Had he done so surely all the Jews would have believed in him and would have been remorseful over their conduct, for

this would have been a great sign for them. There is not a single recorded instance that any of the Jews believed in him because of his resurrection.

8. The Gospels affirm that the mission of Jesus was directed towards the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that is to say, all the tribes of Israel who were scattered at the time of the advent of Jesus in the countries of the East from Palestine all the way to India. At that time, of the twelve tribes of Israel, only two were settled in Palestine. The remaining ten tribes were described as the lost sheep.

If the Christian affirmation is accepted that Jesus died on the cross at 33 years of age and has ever since been seated on the right hand of God in heaven, then what became of his prophecies in which he had stated that he had to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel who were not then settled in Palestine, as is written:

> And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd. (John, 10:16-17)
>
> I am sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matthew, 15:24)

And again:

> These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them: Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matthew, 10:5-6)

Yet again:

> For the Son of man came to seek to save the lost. (Luke, 19:10)

All these statements taken together clearly establish that the

mission of Jesus was confined to the house of Israel and that he was determined to go in search of the lost tribes in the countries in which they were scattered. If he had died on the cross at the age of 33 years, how were these prophecies fulfilled? It would mean that he had failed altogether in his mission.

In conclusion, I would draw attention to the remarkable fact that the Holy Quran affirms in the clearest terms that God Almighty saved Jesus from death upon the cross, and that far from becoming accursed, God exalted him spiritually to Himself. For instance:

> The enemies of Jesus devised their plans (to destroy him), and God devised His plan (to save him); God is the best of planners. (Holy Quran, aal-e-'Imran 3:55)

God reassured Jesus:

> I shall cause thee to die a natural death, and shall exalt thee to Myself, and shall clear thee from the calumnies of those who disbelieve, and shall place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Judgment; and then to Me shall be your return and I will judge between you concerning that wherein you differ. (Holy Quran, aal-e-'Imran 3:56)

ABDUS SALAM MADSEN

Abdus Salam Madsen was born in 1928, the son of a vicar in the Lutheran Church. He entered the Faculty of Theology at Copenhagen University. In 1958 he qualified as a teacher and became a senior teacher in 1973. He won scholarships to Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, USA, in 1975 and 1977. He joined the Ahmadiyya Movement in 1956 and is the author of a number of books on religion. He has translated the Holy Quran into Danish.

Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross
Quranic and Islamic Evidence
by ABDUS SALAM MADSEN

The full title of my address is: The natural death of Jesus Christ and his deliverance from the accursed death by crucifixion according to Quranic (Islamic) Evidence.

This title is so formulated and is justified, because:
1) The Christian Churches teach that Jesus was crucified and suffered an accursed death on the cross for the atonement of the sins of mankind - that he was resurrected on the third day and ascended bodily to heaven, wherefrom he will descend to judge the living and the dead.

2) Many so - called orthodox Muslims teach that Jesus was not put on the cross, but someone else - resembling him was crucified in his place, whereas Jesus was raised to heaven in his mortal body, and that he remains there alive to descend in the latter days with the same physical body to judge according to Islamic law - as understood by these so-called orthodox Muslims.

It is my purpose to show that these two versions of the life, mission and death of Jesus do not find any support in Quranic evidence.

The word evidence may mean two things: witness (*shahada*) and proof (*burhan*). So some people might be satisfied to answer the question raised by the title of my address with a summing up of the Quranic witness as to the natural death of Jesus and his deliverance from death on the cross, while others might insist on some additional proof to substantiate the scriptural evidence given.

Now if we turn to a study of the Quran we shall see that this division between the two meanings of the term "evidence" is not relevant, because it is a striking characteristic of the Quranic revelation that it gives not only witness, but always and at the same time also furnishes proof. The Quran never makes an assertion and merely leave it at that. The Quran invariably gives proof in support of every assertion. A close study of any given passage will reveal that there is full evidence, i.e. both witness and proof together.

You may have noticed that I treat Quranic evidence and Islamic evidence as synonymous. Muslim scholars state that there are several sources of knowledge of what Islam is. First the Quran, then the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and then the collected body of the sayings of the Prophet, many add to these such sources as consensus and rational insight. Whatever the learned scholars of different schools have been inclined to say about the classification of these sources, I for my part, and those who think like me, underline the simple historical fact that the Quranic revelation that came to Muhammad[sa] over a period of 23 years from 610 to 632 A.D. and was committed to memory and writing simultaneously, is in all respects a perfect and sufficient document from which we gain all necessary evidence about our faith. Whatever is reported from the Holy Prophet is by way of interpretation of this evidence. That is to say, what the Holy Prophet said has no independent status; it is all through secondary, though it serves to elucidate many a point. Yet it can never add any essential knowledge to that which we possess in the Holy Quran. Reason can with all its inherent weaknesses help us to understand the Message, but just as interpretation is already incorporated in the Message, likewise are rational arguments -as I have already pointed out. There remains one single perfect source

of Islamic evidence: the Holy Quran.

The plan of my address

The outline of the material gathered by me from the Quran will be presented in three sections:

1. The mortality of man.

2. The mortality and death of all Prophets.

3. The mortality and death of Jesus.

In the last section I shall treat in some detail with the two texts that are specially relevant for the understanding of the deliverance of Jesus from death on the cross.

As I have said, I shall restrict myself primarily to the Quranic evidence, applying the principle that the Quran is the best interpreter of the Quran, i.e. to discover the correct connotation of a phrase we must have recourse to other texts in which the phrase has been used. We may also have recourse to classical dictionaries, but only as a possibly helpful medium, without placing too great confidence in all the mass of material which is often confusingly offered us there. Finally we might incidentally consult commentaries, mainly for the sake of curiosity, as we know only too well that commentators were only too prone to accept any fantastic story they gathered from Jewish or Christian sources. The modem trend in Islamic exegesis reveals a growing realization of the credulity of earlier commentators in accepting what is known as Jewish tales. Strangely enough this criticism has not yet in any great measure been directed against the heretic Christian interpretation of the event of the crucifixion which is so obviously the source on which many commentators rely when they touch upon the simple account of this event found in the Quran.

All men are created mortal and are bound to die after

a certain term.

On this we shall let the Quran speak for itself in the following references:

> God said : Go forth (Adam and Eve) some of you being enemies of others. And for you there is an abode on earth and a provision for a time. God said: Therein you shall live, and therein you shall die, and therefrom you shall be brought forth (al-A'raf 7:25-26).
>
> Have We (God) not made the earth vast enough to gather the living and the dead? (al-Mursalat 77:26-27).
>
> Say: The angel of death that has been put in charge over you will cause you to die: then to your Lord you will be brought back. (as-Sajdah 32:12).
>
> And We cause that which We will to stay in the wombs for an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babes, then We rear you that you may attain to your age of full strength. And there are some of you that are caused to die early, and there are others among you who reach extreme old age with the result that they know nothing after having had knowledge.
>
> (al-Hajj 22:6, vide also an-Nahl 16:71)
>
> Every soul shall taste of death. (al-Anbiya', 21:36)
>
> Have they not seen how many generations have We destroyed before them, and that they never return to them (Ya Sin, 36:32)
>
> And behind the dead is a barrier until the day when they shall be raised again. (al-Mu'minun, 23:101)

A brief commentary on the foregoing verses may be helpful: The first two Quranic texts affirm that both life and death are

bound to be confined to this earth, the third text states that God has created angels that are especially commanded to execute His decree of death which must come for every human being. The two succeeding references give a more detailed description of the creation of life, its development through different - higher and higher -stages and its natural end in decrepitude and death. The three last quotations affirm that death is inevitable, also in the sense that there is absolutely no return to life on this earth, and that the coming life will be a new creation of God -not belonging to our present system.

All prophets have died

> We did not bestow on the Messengers bodies that ate no food, nor were they to live for ever. (al-Anbiya', 21:9)
>
> We granted not everlasting life to any human being before thee. If then thou shouldst die, shall they live on for ever? (al-Anbiya', 21:35)
>
> Muhammad is only a Messenger. Verily, all Messengers have passed away before him. (aal-e-'Imran, 3:145)
>
> The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger. All Messengers have indeed passed away before him. His mother was a righteous woman. They both used to eat food. See, how We explain the signs for their benefit, and see, how they are turned away. (al-Ma'idah, 5:76)

With this last verse we are already partly tackling the next question which particularly deals with the death of Jesus. He is included -of course - in the category of both humans and Prophets, and so the question could be regarded as answered, but as some people tend to make him something special and outside the normal categories, we have to deal with it.

The natural death of Jesus Christ

From the relevant references we shall here exclude the two that deal with the crucifixion event, and shall deal with them later. (They are aal-e-'Imran, 3:55-56 and an-Nisa', 4:158-159).

There are also other Quranic verses that prove to the satisfaction of any reasonable unbiassed person that Jesus lived a full life and died an honourable death at a good old age after having completed his mission as the Jewish Messiah.

> Keep in mind when God will say to Jesus, son of Mary: Didst thou say to people: Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah? -and he will answer: Holy art Thou, I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou who art the Knower of hidden things. I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me: Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them, and Thou art Witness over all things. (al-Ma'idah, 5:117-118)
>
> Jesus said: I am a servant of Allah. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet. And He has made me blessed wheresoever I may be and has enjoined on me prayer and almsgiving so long as I live. He has made me dutiful toward my mother, and He has not made me haughty and unblessed. Peace was on me the day I was born, and peace there shall be on me the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised up to life

again. (Maryam, 19:31-34).

Of these verses the first proves:

1) The corruption of Christian doctrine took place after the death of Jesus.

2) If Jesus were still alive, Christianity would still exist in its pure form.

3) Jesus will not appear a second time in this world, as he would then become aware of the mentioned corruption and could not, therefore, plead ignorance in front of God's judgment seat.

The second verse equally proves that Jesus must have died and could not exist in heaven with his physical body.

1) If he was still alive, he would have to give alms in heaven, but who would need alms there?

2) If he would descend again to the earth alive, he would have to follow the Jewish prescriptions on both prayer and almsgiving - and could not be a follower of the Islamic Law.

3) Did his mother accompany him in his ascension? How could he otherwise behave like a dutiful son towards her?

What happened at the event of the crucifixion?

We will deal now in some detail with the verses that refer to the event that took place at the crucifixion and see what actually happened according to the simple and clear statement of the Quran. In doing this we deem it advisable to put the two texts parallel to each other as one explains the other:

The Jews planned, and Allah also planned, and Allah is the Best of planners. When Allah

And their saying: We did kill the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, whereas they slew him

said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die a natural death and will exalt thee to Myself and will clear thee from the charges of those who disbelieve and will place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection.

(aal-e-'Imran, 3:55-56)

not nor killed him on the cross, but he was made to appear to them as dead. Those who differ therein are certainly in doubt about it. They have no knowledge thereof, but only follow conjecture, and they certainly did not kill him. On the contrary, Allah exalted him to Himself, and Allah is Mighty and Wise.

(an-Nisa', 4:158-159)

By reading the two versions together it becomes clear that the plan (*makr*) of the Jews was to kill Jesus and thereby disprove his claim to Messiahship, because he Who was hanged on a tree was cursed by God (Deut 21:23). But God also had a plan or a counter-plan (*makr*) and that was to save Jesus from the accursed death and exalt him in rank and position.

It is clear that God's plan could not be a supernatural event like casting the likeness of Jesus on someone else and raising him bodily to heaven; nor to let him die and then resurrect him and raise him bodily to heaven. *Makr* (plan) means to change something to the opposite of that which is designed by the opponent by a stratagem or device or other means. Thus *makr* operates through means adopted in this world for achieving a purpose, and no miracle can be called a *makr*. The second reference also ends with a reference to God's Wisdom. What Wisdom - Divine or otherwise - could there be in cheating the Jews, the Romans and the disciples alike by substituting another person for Jesus?

The expression used for natural death is *tawaffa*. Without any

exception it means:

> to take possession of the soul; to cause somebody to die after completing his or her term.

The Quran contains as many as 22 (twenty-two) clear references where *tawaffa* has been used in that connotation. We have excluded therefrom the references where Jesus is mentioned as the object of *tawaffa*, because they are under discussion. There are two separate verses (al-An'am, 6:61 and az-Zumar, 39:42) about the taking possession of the soul during sleep. But that does not detract from the connotation that we have mentioned, as a simple quote from the last-mentioned verse will prove:

> Allah takes away (*yatawaffa*) the souls of human beings at the time of their death; and during their sleep of those that are not yet dead. Then He retains those against whom He has decreed death and sends back the others till an appointed term.

Tawaffa is never used for taking possession of the body. It is the soul that is taken - either permanently (at death) or ad interim (in sleep). So *Mutawaffika* means as ibn 'Abbas reported; *Mumituka* (I will cause thee to die) - Bukhari.

The phrase *rafi'uka* means I will exalt thee. *Raf'a* is used twice about Jesus. Once it is used about Idris (Enoch) in Maryam, 19:58:

> And We exalted him to a lofty station.

This is a normal usage of the Quran. Muhammad Asad says in his Commentary (p.177) that when God is the subject, *raf'a* means invariably: to exalt in rank. Also *Mufradat* says about Jesus that his *raf'a* is to be understood *min haithi-ttashrif* : by way of bestowing honour on him.

Ibn Khatib says in his "modern" Egyptian Commentary (The Clearest of Commentaries) what we have translated here.

> And those who assert that Jesus is dead, point to the

> word of the Exalted God: Every soul shall taste of death, and Jesus -peace be upon him -belonged to the human species for which death is ordained. Some people presume that he is dead and lies buried in a locality which they mention by name, and maybe it is India, and God - may He be exalted - knows best what He has said and done.

Those who allege that Jesus was not put on the cross should look up a Quranic Concordance, where they will find that the word *salaba* is used at five (5) places about this special death - punishment (namely Yusuf 12:42, al-A'raf 7:126, TaHa 20:50 and al-Ma'idah 5:33). At two places it is used (*sulb, aslab*) about spine, back-bone, namely at-Tariq 86:8 and an-Nisa' 4:24. So in accordance with this *Mufradat* confirms that *salaba* means:

> to break the spine or back-bone or to bring out the marrow of the bone (by breaking it).

So what the verse states: *maqataluhu wama salabuhu* means that they did not kill him (by strangling or stoning) or by a completion of the well-known death-punishment (in so far as they did not break his bones).

But he appeared to them like one killed, says the verse. Now *shubbiha* and its derivatives are found in the Quran at 12 (twelve) places, invariably meaning "to be like or similar" to something or someone. But as it is here used in the passive, it can only refer, according to Arabic grammar, to a wellknown (implied) subject, i.e. in the context it can only refer to Jesus and not to some one else who is neither mentioned here nor elsewhere in the Quran.

To sum up: the Jews plotted to disprove the Messiahship of Jesus by killing him on the cross, but God counter-acted their plot on their own plane by saving him from the shameful death

on the cross, so that he only appeared to them as dead. In fact he survived and lived to a ripe old age as promised in the word *Mutawaffika* which has a double meaning: not only to cause to die (a natural death), but also - as interprets ibn Khatib: *Mustanwaff ajalaka* : I intend to complete your lifeterm.

I have so far kept strictly within the boundaries of the evidence furnished by the Quran. But the attentive listener will have noticed that I made a passing reference to Sahih al-Bukhari who quoted Ibn 'Abbas for the interpretation of *Mutawaffika* as meaning *Mumituka* (I shall cause you to die). But this is not a saying of the Holy Prophet; it is only an interpretation of an expression used in the Quran.

In order not to leave Hadith (sayings of the Holy Prophet) totally untouched I would like to quote the three which are brought forward to show that Tradition also regards Jesus as dead. But first I would like to explain why there are only three traditions affirming the death of Jesus. The answer is simple: because the Quran is so clear and unambiguous, that there was no need of great elaboration of this self-evident point. These three are:

1) If Moses and Jesus had been alive, they would have had no choice but to follow me. (Kathir Vol. II, p.245 & *al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir* 2nd Part, p.24)

2) Verily, Jesus son of Mary, lived for 120 years, and I (Muhammad) see myself as only entering upon the beginnings of the sixties. (Kanz al-'Ummal, Part 6, p.120)

3) During his spiritual ascent to heaven (*Mi'raj*), the Prophet saw Jesus together with John in the second heaven. (Bukhari, Part 2, Chapter on *al-Isra*: the Night Journey)

The first two are very clear in their evidence, while the third may need some explanation. The point to be deduced from that is that Jesus and John were together in the same state, so either both are dead or both are living. It is admitted by all that John is dead, so Jesus must also have died.

After the death of Muhammad some of his disciples, among them 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, doubted that he was really dead. However, Abu Bakr, after having paid his last respects to his beloved master, ascended the pulpit in the Mosque and recited the verse of the Quran:

> Muhammad is only a Messenger. All Messengers before him have passed away. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn upon your heels? (aal-e-'Imran 3:145)

Abu Bakr added:

> If any of you worshipped Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead, but if you worship God, you should know that God is Ever-Living and does not die. [Chapter on the letters of the Prophet to *Kirsa* (Chosroes) and *Qaisar* (Caesar).]

This was the first instance of *Ijma'* or consensus of the Community, because the response of the disciples is well-known and reported in the same hadith: By God, it was as if this verse was not revealed by Allah before Abu Bakr recited it, and every one received it from him, and I did not hear any one who did not recite it. No one objected that Jesus or any other prophet had not died. Every one received it and accepted it and confirmed it! How then can any person deny that which has been confirmed by that august assembly?

It is not within the scope of my address to set out an account of

the post crucifixion life of Jesus. That will be done by others. But to end my brief address in a fitting manner I shall quote a well-known verse from Sura al-Mu'minun :

> And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign and gave them shelter on a pleasant plateau with springs or running water. (al-Mu'minun 23:51)

Thus after having been delivered from his enemies and their persecutions - just as Noah, Moses and Aaron had earlier been delivered from their enemies - Jesus, like them, was given the opportunity to complete his mission in another country, of which this verse gives a striking description.

Our last word is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and peace be upon all His Messengers.

R. C. E. SKOLFIELD

Reginald Charles Everard Skolfield was born in 1918 in Lincolnshire, the son of a head teacher. He trained as a printer and worked in this craft for five years until the outbreak of war in 1939. He joined the Royal Air Force and served in the U.S.A., the Middle East, India and Burma. After the war he lived for some years in New York, then Australia, finally returning to live in Britain. His experiences of different cultures in different lands had broadened his interest and he became interested in comparative religion. He wrote a book on this subject. He also became interested in the work of the Promised Messiah and, though not an Ahmadi, he became convinced that Jesus did not die on the cross. He declares it is now possible to distinguish the true story in the Bible.

Some Observations on the Life of Jesus by R. C. E. SKOLFIELD

I am honoured to be speaking here today, in the company of many learned friends and scholars. I am not a scholar, but rather a sceptic. I am not an Ahmadi, but independent and holding to my own views. I am a spiritualist by sympathy and find that its teachings are lofty and understandable, about the Great Spirit, whom we call GOD, of the North American Red Indians, for example. Spiritualist philosophy is very impressive, and embraces all religions and all men as brothers. It is not like sectarian religion which forms itself into small groups (not altogether desireable and in many instances praiseworthy) but is all loving.

I was brought up in the country in a conventional English way in the Christian teaching. My father was a school teacher and we worked with the clergyman who often lived near and took a natural interest in the life of the school. My father used to play the harmonium for the services on Sundays and my mother was active in social life in the village.

As a child, the Christian teaching did not impress me and seemed remote. I imagined Jesus floating around in the sky somewhere. The church services appeared rather grim with their emphasis on blood and wounding, threats of hell fire on cold winter mornings, and the Great Redeemer in the Sky waiting to penalise me for my sins, with Eternal Damnation.

It was not until the death of my mother that I began to seek out religion and began to wonder if it would have made me a better

person. Before this I never really thought about life properly. A friend recommended Spiritualism and I went to visit a little church run by an elderly Welshman, who trained plain simple women who often worked in the fields in the surrounding countryside and were the wives of labourers, to be mediums. Through clairvoyance and clairvaudience they gave the most elevating addresses and I was suitably inspired and most impressed, in fact never losing to this day the respect for the genuine, unsophisticated mediums in this movement. In primitive societies, and I am thinking of the Australian aborigines at this moment, they relied heavily on the mediumship of their women to find water holes in the desert. This is surely the Spirit of God.

In 1960 I went to Liverpool to work and found lodging with a spinster lady, a staunch Christian, who took other lodgers, mainly students at Liverpool University. In this way I met first a Bahai, and went to local meetings with him and became interested in comparative religion, and then an Ahmadi, a Doctor's son from Lahore, who gave me lots of books about his beliefs. When he told me he believed that Jesus had been saved from death on the cross, I was immediately impressed and thought it to be true, so much so that in 1962 when I took my family to Australia, I wrote a book on comparative religion and dealt with this idea of the survival of Jesus, finding indeed confirmation in the Bible.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the man who had been inspired to say that Jesus had been saved from death on the cross. We were at last enabled to look at Christianity in a different light. Today I am convinced there was no such thing as the Ascension, one of the pillars of the Faith and Dogma. Yet how could this misinterpretation of the scriptures have arisen?

At the Council of Bishops at Nicaea in 325 A.D. it was deliberately

misinterpreted through self-will, self interest no doubt, and Bishop Arius was condemned for "heresy", the one who was right in saying that Jesus was a man like any other. Then we had dark ages and the suppression of knowledge, burning of books and so on.

Today we can go into churches up and down the land and find devoted congregations (I was in one at Easter in the heart of the country and the congregation was of such nature that it could have been set there a thousand years ago) having the same age old beliefs. What is truth? asked Pilate. Indeed we still do not know the truth of a spiritual world, there is no proof, save what we know through inspired persons; and there would be no Faith if we possessed proof. Jesus tried to prove it by his actions. Mankind has made him fail by making him God, so we have churches split by schisms. Where is the man today who will admit to believing in Angels, Demons and Spirits? (For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection nor angel nor spirit but the Pharisees acknowledge them all (Acts 23:8).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad cut through all this prejudice with his insight. A man of the highest courage, he must deserve the highest praise. In 1899 it was not so easy to put your ideas forward in the face of the British Raj and the full might of Victorian Christian dogma, when nowadays the famous author John Allegro can write a book in which he concludes that Jesus and his disciples were all under the influence of the mushroom drug. (Certainly one could be justified in thinking this of the story of the temptation of Jesus by Satan, when he took him to the top of the mountain). Ahmad was another tremendous personality in the illustrious line of prophets. God does not suffer those who love Him to come to naught, he said. For all the Apostles I am but a servant, like

the humble dust at the door. Every prophet who showed the way of Truth, any day indeed any time, I would sacrifice my life for that supporter of Truth. He delighted in love of God, a deep devotion to Muhammad, and kindness, sympathy and affection for fellow human beings.

He fulfilled the prophecies of the return of the Messiah or the Christ or the Anointed One to all people in a unique way. Being a Persian by race, he was the Promised one of the Zoroastrians; being an Indian by birth, he was the Promised one of the Hindus; being a Muslim by faith, he was the Promised one of the Muslims; and living under a Christian government, and having defended the honour of Jesus and revealed the location of his tomb, he is entitled to be recognised as the Promised one of the Christians.

During a long life he set a supreme example of gentle behaviour to his family, his friends and those who bore enmity towards him. When he proclaimed himself the Promised Messiah and gave his life to God he prospered through all things. And he wrote:

> A time there was when the usual fare on which I lived consisted of the remains from the tables of others. But lo and behold, from mine own table now a large number of families get their daily bread.

Ahmad performed miracles of healing by means of prayers. His life was a shining light and an inspiration to all men.

As Jesus had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem nearly 40 years before it happened, Ahmad foretold, nearly 40 years before in 1906, Death will make such havoc that streams of blood will flow. Indeed, so great will be the destruction on the earth's surface as the world has not witnessed before. Many places will be turned upside down and they will present such scenes of devastation that the world will think they had never been inhabited. All this

will be brought about because men have forsaken God and with all their heart and soul are bent upon the world.

On his death, a Muslim writer said, Passing through a raging tire of opposition and adverse criticism, Mirza Sahib cleared a path for himself and attained to the highest peak of success. A Hindu wrote: To the last moment of his life, Mirza Sahib remained firm in his purpose; in the teeth of opposition from a thousand quarters, he never wavered and never swerved.

Although Ahmad had not been schooled in Arabic, he interpreted the Quran, it is claimed, into its true meaning. He said he had been taught directly through revelation. We find the same example in the Acts of Apostles, when those noble men were filled with the Holy Spirit "and began to speak in other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." They were accused of being drunk, though as Peter protested it was yet early morning.

When he was yet unknown and living in the small town of Qadian, where he was born, God revealed to Ahmad: *I love you. I shall give you a large party of Islam. God will maintain thy name in honour till the world comes to an end and will cause thy message to reach the uttermost corners of the earth. I shall exalt thy name and put thy love into men's hearts. We have sent thee as a blessing and mercy for all people. We have made thee like Jesus, son of Mary.* The reference to Jesus is particularly interesting as it was Ahmad who identified the tomb in Srinagar as that of Jesus.

Ahmad comments on the verses in the Quran denying the death of Jesus on the cross: Almighty God says: The Jews neither slew Jesus nor did they crucify him (made him die on the cross) nay they only suspected that Jesus died on the cross; they had not the proof which would have convinced and satisfied them that Jesus (on whom be peace) had really died on the cross. In these verses

Almighty God says that although it is true that Jesus was placed on the cross, and they determined to kill him, it is wrong for the Jews and Christians to suppose that Jesus had really died on the cross; nay, God created circumstances which saved Jesus from the accursed death on the cross.

It was due to the Majesty and Power of God that it became dark, that there was an earthquake, that Pilate's wife saw a vision, that the Sabbath was about to fall when it was unlawful to let the crucified body remain on the cross, and that Pilate, because of the dream of his wife, became inclined to release Jesus. All this was brought about by God to save Jesus. Also Jesus was made to go into a swoon that he might be taken for dead.

Ahmad says in prayer: Our beloved Allah, save the Christians from worshipping a man as God and fulfil the promises of Thy prophets for this age. Lift the wounded ones from the thorns. Purify them in the fountain of Thy Salvation which lies only in Thy knowledge and Thy love. There is no salvation in the blood of man. Release them, therefore, from the false dogmas of crucifixion and the blood of Jesus. Almighty God, hear me for their benefit, and enlighten their hearts with heavenly light, so that they may see Thee. Do not destroy them as Thou didst in the days of Noah. Have mercy on them. Open their hearts so that they may accept the truth.

Jesus shed his blood, as we have seen, to establish the truth of his words, and therein lies salvation. But salvation, or the eternal life, still has to be earned individually. Today not all Christians believe Jesus was God.

Indeed it is a glorious thing to know Jesus survived; for here is greater proof of God than ever in that God protected him and the prophecies were proved true. Jesus suffered only because of

the faithlessness of people of his time, not because of God.[1]

In believing Jesus died on the cross, only half the story is told, for the prophecy of his survival as shown by reference to[2] Jonah is not fulfilled. The Spirit of every righteous person may ascend to heaven.

In believing that Jesus ascended in his body to heaven we are only pretending in order to glorify him. But if we see in Jesus a man who set out to find God and worked closely with Him to fulfil the prophecies, thereby proving the existence of God, such a man we can truly glorify; we can glorify him without reservation.

There are only two possibilities to be considered concerning the mysterious disappearance of Jesus. First, that Jesus died on the cross and afterwards appeared in spirit to his disciples, as Moses and Elijah had appeared to him. Secondly, that Jesus was delivered from his ordeal and appeared to his disciples in person.

The answer is to be found in his own words. Luke tells us that when Jesus appeared to his disciples they were frightened "and supposed that they saw a Spirit." And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a Spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.

No statement could be more definite than this! Jesus is delighted to see his disciples once more and to show them he has survived. And then again a spirit would not eat broiled fish (Luke) nor prepare a fire and invite his disciples to "come and have breakfast". (John 21:12).

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1 The Christian saying 'God was put upon the cross' is easier to understand when we contemplate that Jesus was the representative of God, or God's Spirit. Therefore God was put upon the cross.

2 The only sign Jesus gave: a prophecy using the story of Jonah where Jonah emerges alive from his ordeal.

Even our beloved spiritualists have not got it right when they say that Jesus appeared to his disciples in a materialised body of spirit, for Jesus himself emphasises that he is not Spirit.

Furthermore, Matthew and John do not speak of an ascent into heaven. John, the "beloved disciple", would certainly have been the one most likely to write of this, had it been so. And they would all have specified a particular place of ascent, which would have been marked and revered to this day.

Dr. Barnes, when Bishop of Birmingham, wrote in 1947:
(Jesus) came to a criminal's end, whose body quite possibly had been flung ignominiously into a common malefactor's grave.

The Rise of Christianity. In his book Where did Jesus Die (1959), a former Imam of the London Ahmadiyya Mosque, J. D. Shams, wrote:
The cloth in which Jesus was wrapped was found in the sepulchre. This cloth is still in existence. It bears the marks of the body of Jesus made by the ointment which was applied to his body.

A group of German scientists in 1957 published results of their researches into the Shroud, in which they proved Jesus was alive when he was taken down from the cross.

It was well known that crucified men lived sometimes for several days, death finally releasing them from their terrible plight in some cases due to starvation and exhaustion, in others to nervous prostration and in others to attacks by birds and wild animals. Herodotus and Josephus recorded cases of men being taken down after several hours and brought back to life.

Jesus was put upon the cross at about nine o'clock in the morning (third watch) and taken down by Joseph of Arimathea and his companions after about six hours. Since Jesus was no weakling but

a strong man still youthful in body, with a strong will, accustomed to hard work and a hard life walking about the countryside, we may understand the surprise of Pilate and the priests when they were told that Jesus was dead.

Now let us look at the Crucifixion again: Jesus, without a doubt, chose his own time for the sacrifice, and by driving the money-changers out of the temple drew their wrath upon himself and spurred the chief priests to take action against him at a time when Jews from all parts of the country were in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

Afterwards, when Peter accused them, the people wept bitter tears, but their regrets did not tum them from their old ways. If they had a conscience about it, they soon forgot.

Although man has never forgotten the Crucifixion, he has not ceased to kill, he has not ceased to bear false witness, he has not ceased to envy and covet his neighbour's belongings. And he never will, for that is the nature of man.

Jesus was a long time praying in the garden, for the disciples had gone to sleep, even Peter. But his decision was made. Then came the soldiers.

That it was necessary for Judas to identify Jesus shows he was of similar appearance to the others. It is said that Judas betrayed him only to get the money for their funds, as he was the treasurer; for he felt confident that Jesus, who had always demonstrated such power and command, would easily escape his captors. When this did not happen Judas, who may have taken it as an instruction - "Go and do what you have to do" - was so overcome with horror that he went to the Priests, threw the money at their feet and then went out and killed himself.

Mark tells us that at the ninth hour, or 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus cried out with a loud voice: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" : and many have said, here was Jesus dying on the cross "disillusioned and defeated", crying out to a God who he felt had deserted him.

The disciples have certainly left us in a quandary; if they heard one saying from the cross, surely they would hear the others. But every account is different.

In any event, the saying is excusable, for until one had suffered such pain, one would have no idea how unbearable it could be. The fact that Jesus knew he would survive,[3] (for he said: ... the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again; this charge I have received from my Father,[4]) would not lessen the pain he endured.

Could it be that at the last moment, Jesus had lost faith; when all through his life he had believed so magnificently? Surely not; for Luke tells us the last saying was: Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit.

Why did God not cause the cross to be thrown down, and release Jesus? Why indeed had He allowed him to be nailed there?

With a single word he could have thrown down the cross, the executioners and the soldiers and dispersed the gaping crowd, writes Daniel-Rope in Jesus in his Time (1945). Why God did not

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3 Earlier, for those who wanted a sign, he had referred to the story of Jonah and the whale (Isaiah, in "The Lord's servant" (53:10) says ... when he makes himself an offering for sin he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days").

4 John 10: 17

do this is not explained.

Alas, man has been given freedom and free will; he has been left to his own devices and to do with his life as he pleases. Therefore he must suffer the consequences not only of his own acts but of the acts of others.

We are indebted to Dr. Coodspeed American historian (and others before him) for pointing out to us that Jesus was speaking the words of his forefather David. And no one knew the scriptures better than Jesus.

They are the words of the twenty-second Psalm, which begins:
My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

This remarkable prophecy, which may have been written, not in David's time but during the deportation nearly 600 years before Jesus, gives a complete picture of the man on the cross and ends:
Posterity shall serve him; men shall tell of the Lord to the coming generation, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, that he has wrought it.

Thus was it seen that while Jesus was a son of David, he was yet his Lord.

Indeed, there were three occasions when Jesus identified himself for posterity, as well as to his own people. The first was in Nazareth, when he quoted Isaiah:
The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has appointed me to preach good news to the poor... [5]

The second was at the hour of his trial in Jerusalem, when he referred to Daniel: and behold with the clouds of heaven, there

5 Luke 4:18.

came one like a son of man ...[6]; and the third was on the cross, when he quoted the first line of the Psalm of David.

Jesus knew beforehand exactly what he must do to prove he was the promised Messiah. This is what is meant by his sacrifice for us. If people had believed him, it would not have been necessary; but because men had not believed he had to prove by the Crucifixion that what he had told them was the truth, for only then would it be possible to identify him with David's prophecy. As it was already put there in the scriptures Jesus knew he must go through with it to fulfil them.

And now we may all look back to this supreme act of sacrifice and know of a certainty that it is possible for us all to attain to everlasting life through belief in God. Jesus, in effect, died for the truth[7].

Supposing Jesus had been too exhausted to utter this cry? The whole significance of the crucifixion would have been lost to us. Today the Crucifixion is the symbol of Christianity and an image of Jesus pinned to the cross stands upon the altars of our churches throughout the world. It is a pity; for the supposed death of Jesus on the cross represents one man's fight against the evil of his day and the triumph of his word overcoming the centuries; it also represents his defeat and the triumph of evil over good, of ignorance over knowledge, of sin over virtue. It accuses us, while his deliverance from the cross encourages us, and it is for this reason misrepresented and mistaken by so many people of other religions.

Muslims say that every word of the Quran is the Word of God.

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6 Daniel 7:13.

7 Where is the man who will openly admit today to believing in angels, spirits, demons and evil spirits: THE 'TRUTH' OF JESUS.

It is like saying that every word of the Bible is the Word of God, when we know that in the latter there are borrowed teachings, the story of the Flood for example from the Epic of Gilgamesh, and Moses calling upon the Laws of king Hammurabi, who lived some six hundred years previously, for his ten commandments. We cannot write about Jesus without attempting to interpret the writings of St. Paul, without whom Christianity would not have survived.

The apostles' dilemma now becomes obvious, for while knowing the true story they had yet to protect Jesus by remaining silent as to his whereabouts. And they had to preach the gospel of resurrection, as they were charged to do, still with no sign or proof to give to the people. Merely to teach that Jesus had survived the cross in accordance with the prophecies would have been over the heads of the people, for these had known other cases of men surviving crucifixion. Thus Paul writes, (1 Corinthians 15:12): Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised, and our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

Indeed the task becomes confusing, and leads to confusion. There may have been originally the idea of "Messianic expectation" in the minds of some of the disciples and they may have carried it to some extent to those they taught. It is apparent that Jesus had another kingdom in mind, the unseen one; and for Paul it is the same. The resurrection too of the body at some future time was not taught by Jesus in the same tradition as the Jewish fathers. Thus Paul writes (2 Corinthians 12:2): I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God

knows - and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

We serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit, says Paul (and he did not differ from Jesus in his teaching).

We wonder whether Paul, knowing as he did the true story of the revival of Jesus and indeed having been taught in person by Jesus for three years, was telling a lie in order to promote the faith (would the world have accepted it without the story of the "dying god" with as much fervour as it finally did) - and was Paul justified in bending the truth or was he being very naughty, as Dr. Hugh Schonfield says of the later Christians who "were compelled to develop doctrines according to the special needs of a pagan environment". Was he writing in an allegorical form?

We should be profoundly disappointed if we were to find Paul to be the least bit dishonest. We are indeed relieved to see the answer to our problem in Romans. I was once alive apart from the law, he writes, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; . . . : For sin finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me.

It is therefore dear for him to write that Jesus had died while still alive!

Whether Jesus actually went to Kashmir after the crucifixion or died and was buried a little while after by the shores of the Dead Sea would certainly be interesting to prove either way. Without proof we must accept the word of the Promised Messiah.

It remains for me to pray that God may move the Muslims to recognise Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a true son of Muhammad, who glorified his name and brought everything to the attention of the Western world, and to embrace his movement with arms

of Love. And for Christians to bless him for opening their eyes to the Truth.

SHAIKH ABDUL QADIR

Sheikh Abdul Qadir was born in 1919. His father was a convert to Islam from Hinduism, and the family, therefore, bears the title of Sheikh. A scholar of repute, he is the author of several books and pamphlets including The Inmates of the Catacombs, The Qumran Scrolls, The Holy Quran and the Orientalists.

Jesus Travels to India and Kashmir
The Post Crucifixion Life of Jesus
by SHAIKH ABDUL QADIR

TOWARDS the end of the nineteenth century the Promised Messiah[as], the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, wrote a book which he called Masih Hindustan Mein (Jesus in India). In this book he gave an account of a grand discovery - a discovery of interest to all peoples of the world.

From the late 19th century onwards, more and more discoveries began to point to the fact that Jesus Christ did not die on the cross. He was saved from an accursed death. Two Gospels of the New Testament, Mark and Luke, speak of the Ascension of Jesus to heaven. But the texts on this point are now generally dismissed as fabrications and fictitious. They are later interpolations; not part of the original text. Christianity today is the most important among the religions of the world, both in respect of its numbers and in respect of its influence over world affairs. Yet it is true that of the life of Jesus we know only a fragment, confined to a brief period of 2-3 years. The rest of Jesus's life remains veiled.

According to the chronology now generally accepted, Jesus was born in 9 B.C. The event of the cross took place in April 33 A.D.[1] From the death on the cross God saved Jesus. What happened after this? Where did Jesus go? How did he pass the rest of his days? What happened to the Holy Mother? How many of the

1 J. Bronowski, The Ascent of Man (BBC) 1974 INDEX "Jesus Christ"

Apostles remained with him? All these are interesting questions. A number of recent studies by European and other scholars leave no doubt that Jesus was taken down alive from the cross, while he was in a state of deep swoon. To cite a few instances, one may refer to Robertson Graves and Joshua Podro's "The Nazarene Gospel Restored" (1954), and "Jesus in Rome" (1957) which treat of this theme and I quote from a note in Jesus in Rome:

> Jesus, though officially crucified in A.D. 30, escaped alive, probably to Parthia, and in A.D. 35 was seen on the road to Damascus by St. Paul-who had been sent there to bring him back for a second crucifixion. St. Ignatius wrote to the Smyrneans, not earlier than A.D. 70, that he "both knew and believed" Jesus to be still alive and in the flesh. A passage of Suetonius's Twelve Caesars, referring apparently to A.D. 49, reports Jesus as having raised disturbances in Rome "at the instigation of Chrestus", a synonym for "Christus". The authors compare this passage with an early Talmudic account of the Messiah's having been seen among the beggars at the gate of Rome. They suggest that if this was a prophecy that the Messiah must raise the standard of Jesus, his visit to Rome had been undertaken in fulfilment of national liberation in the enemy citadel. What eventually became of Jesus, they leave an open question; though critically discussing Muslim and pre-Muslim accounts of his appearance in India about A.D. 50, and of his burial by St. Thomas at Srinagar not later than the year 72. (Jesus in Rome)

The authors were unaware of what the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement had written years before in his book "Jesus in India",

written in April 1899. This book saw the light of day in 1903 when it was serialised in the journal Review of Religions (both Urdu and English editions). The English version was captioned An Important Discovery regarding Jesus Christ. The book Jesus in India was not published until six months after the death of the Promised Messiah. Today European scholars are obliged to take serious note of the discoveries recorded in this book.

It must be remembered that the first ever reference to Ascension is in the closing verses of Mark.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1969) an article on Mark terms it as "spurious ending".

Because of the new light which the ancient manuscripts throw on the subject and researches of Biblical scholars, these verses pertaining to ascension have been expunged from the concluding portion of the texts of Luke and Mark in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. However, there are footnotes indicating that "some manuscripts inserted these verses".

(ii) Apart from the four Gospels, we may also refer to the following earliest documents in Edessan Christianity, namely:

(a) The Gospel of Thomas. This contains 114 sayings of Jesus Christ. A Coptic translation of these has been found in the Egyptian village Nag Hammadi, in an ancient graveyard.

(b) The Odes of Solomon, This Solomon is not King Solomon but the author of 42 songs composed in Syriac. These are hymns celebrated among the early Christians of Edessa and sung by them at their congregations. In some of these Jesus Christ himself addresses the World. Skarin states:

> If you have wondered, as I used to, what writings of Jesus would have been like had he left a written message, you should rejoice as I have rejoiced in the

Odes of Solomon. (Annalff Skarin, "Ye are Gods" Philosophical Library, New York, p.217).

(c) A Syriac Song of the Pearl consisting of 105 verses.

This song, full of metaphors consists of three figures, the Father, the King of Kings, the Mother, the Queen of the East, and the Brother "the next in rank" on the heights of WARKAN (means elevated place).

In 1969 was published the exciting book called the Crucible of Christianity (edited by Prof. Arnold Toynbee). In this book it is stated that these three early documents belong to the first century A.D.

We will have occasion later to point out that according to these documents Jesus Christ was delivered from the cross and having found this deliverance he gathered his followers and settled in a land resembling PARADISE.

It is surprising that in the 2nd century in the West the Hebrew Gospel was not known.

And yet in India, in the North West to be precise, the Hebrew Gospel was known. We have a philosopher and Christian scholar of Alexandria, Pantaenus, who lived in the middle of the 2nd century AD. who says that in the course of his travels in India he came across the Hebrew Gospel. In fact according to Jerome (A.D. 346-420) he brought back one copy of the Hebrew Gospel from India to Alexandria. Nothing, however, is known of this manuscript. May be it was destroyed by the Church. The following quotation from the Crucible of Christianity is full of significance:

> The earliest documents we have on Edessan Christianity - namely the Gospel of Thomas, the song of the Pearl contained in the Acts of Thomas, and

> the Odes of Solomon go back, in part, to the end of the 1st century and display the characteristic features of Judea Christianity. - Beyond Edessa, Christianity penetrated into Adiabne, where there was an important Jewish Community, and no doubt reached India very soon, since Pantaenus, writing in the mid-2nd Century, asserts that he found in India a gospel in the Hebrew Script. (The Crucible of Christianity, edited by Arnold Toynbee, London 1969, p. 277b).

(iii) The whole lot of Apocryphal and gnostic literature provides descriptions of events after the crucifixion. It also contains accounts of the missionary plans of the disciples of Jesus, couched in pious language used in narratives of miracles. For example in Acts of St. Thomas we read that after the crucifixion the Messiah drew lots for selecting disciples for the various missionary campaigns. As a result of this St. Thomas was nominated missionary for India. So Thomas was sent to India. He visited Taxila where he achieved great success, so much so that King Gondophorus reportedly became a Christian. The arrival of Jesus himself in India is described in these words as a miraculous appearance.

And when night fell and he (St. Thomas) slept, the Lord came and stood at his head, saying, Thomas, rise early, and having blessed them all: for by thy going shall many take refuge with me. (The Apocryphal New Testament by M. R. James, p. 377).

As already pointed out the Acts of St. Thomas also contain an early Ode (consisting of 105 verses) in which we read of heights in far off East, called the heights of Warkan. Here flourished the Kingdom of God. Here ruled the King of Kings. Here was the Queen Mother of the East and next to her in rank was a Brother. Warkan is a Syriac word meaning 'elevated place'. The

three persons mentioned are probably God, Mary and the son of Mary. Gnostic and Apocryphal literature is almost like a heap of pitchblend, all brown to black sand containing particles of radium waiting for a Madame Curie to sift.

(iv) In ancient Cairo there was a synagogue. This was really a church which the Jews transformed into Geniza in 882 A.D. In 1890 when books buried underground at this spot were dug up, about two hundred thousand pages of ancient writings in Hebrew came to light. A book of unusual significance was also identified. This is called the Zadokite document (The Damascus Rule). It contains an account of a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of his heart. This Teacher is said to have fled from Jerusalem to Damascus. Some scholars think that this Teacher is Jesus Christ. The Zadokite document throws further light on the presence of Jesus in Damascus. Fragments of this book were also found in the valley of Qumran. All this evidence dates from the first century A.D. Its importance and its historical significance is obvious.

(v) The Odes of Solomon consists of 42 Syriac Odes of Christians of the first century. In 1908 James Rendel Harris, famous Syriac scholar, was able to locate this forgotten treasure. What he found was a sixteenth century manuscript.[2] Some Odes included in this manuscript are put in the mouth of Jesus Christ who addresses the world in these words:

> They who saw me marvelled at me, because I was persecuted, and they supposed that I was swallowed up: for I seemed to them as one of the lost.

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2 The Lost Books of the Bible (the World Publishing Company, New York, 1944. Second Part "Forgotten Books of Eden". "The Odes of Solomon" (p. 120-140)

And I did not perish, for I was not their brother nor my birth like theirs.
And they sought for my death and did not find it. (ODE 28 verses 8, 14, 15).
And I rose up and am with them; I will speak by their mouth.
I did not perish, though they devised it against me.
And I made a congregation of living men amongst his dead men; and I spoke with them by living lips.

(ODE 42 v. 6, 14, 18)

One of the Odes speaks of a land resembling paradise, an eminence. Here apparently Jesus and his followers found shelter and became settled. Biblical scholars think that the Gospel of St. John and these odes are drawn from the same source.[3] From this one can easily see the historical significance of these Odes.

(vi) The years 1945-1947 are very important. They proved most productive for scholars interested in reconstructing Jewish and early Christian history. To this period of three years belong two most important treasures of historical evidence couched in the two ancient languages Hebrew and Coptic. Of these one was found in the Qumran Valley near the Dead Sea and the other in Nag Hammadi, a village in Egypt. The Nag Hammadi documents were contained in a sealed jar. The writings, 52 in number (consisting of 1,191 surviving pages) deal with the beliefs of early Christians. They are all written in the Coptic language. It is the literature of Gnostics the Hebrew Christians - the more pious part of the Christian Community. When the Roman Church set about destroying this literature, early Christians collected it and buried it underground in a graveyard. This literature contains the Gospel of St. Thomas. This Gospel contains the earliest

3 Ode -11 John and Qumran

version of 114 sayings of Jesus Christ, many of which the present day reader does not find in the synoptic Gospels. The most interesting point is that this literature contains dialogues which Jesus Christ held after the event of the cross. This treasure includes besides the Gospel of St. Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Truth and the Epistle of James. This discovery points to the changes which took place in early Christian beliefs. It also points to what happened to Jesus after the crucifixion. It also contains the parables and teachings of Jesus. These Gospels make clear that the death of Jesus on the cross is a myth. Jesus lived in Palestine for 550 days after the crucifixion, and he lived in the company of some of his followers and kept himself busy in teaching and training them. This proves that Jesus was alive after the incident of the crucifixion.

I give some excerpts from Nag Hammadi Gospels. The Gospel of Philip says:

> Those who say that the Lord died first and then rose up are in error, for he rose up first and then died.

Quoting a passage from the unpublished document Bertil Gartner writes:

> In one of the many documents from the Nag-Hammadi Library, the as yet unpublished Apocryphon of James, we read that the risen Lord walked with his disciples for 550 days after his resurrection, and that it is Peter and James who are there entrusted with the secret knowledge.[4]

The same author quotes another passage from the Apocryphon

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4 R. M. Wilson, The Gospel of Philip (1962) p. 85

Bertil Gartner, The Theology of the Gospel of Thames; pp. 102-103

of James.

Jesus said: Leave James and Peter to me, that I may fill them with fullness. And when we had called them both, he drew them aside at the same time commanding the others to attend to their tasks.[5]

In the Gospel of Thomas (published in 1959) we read:
Again we read in the Gospel of Thomas:
The disciples said to Jesus: We know that you are going to leave us. Who shall (then) be chief over us? Jesus said to them: Wherever you have come, you shall go to James, the righteous one.[6]

(But) the days shall come when you shall seek me and you shall not find me. (Logian 38)[7]

It is clear from the above quoted passages that Jesus Christ escaped death on the cross. He lived with his disciples for nearly a year and a half, he 'filled' Peter and James with 'fullness' because they had to look after his sheep in his absence. At last he left his disciples for good, nominating James as their Head.

There is also another find, a parchment spread over 30 pages. This was found on the border between Egypt and Sudan. In this we read that Jesus Christ remained alive after the crucifixion and could be seen in the flesh assuring his followers that he was alive and among them. (Kurt Berna, Christ did not Perish on the cross).

(vii) In 1947 were found the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Valley of Qumran, in the caves of the neighbourhood. Many Hebrew writings up to the first Century A.D. came to light. At that time Jews were divided into three sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes. The Qumran find belongs to the Essenes. It was among the Essenes that John the Baptist and Jesus grew up. The

5 Ibid. p. 120-121
6 Bertil Gartner: The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas; p. 56-57
7 Ibid. p. 115

Qumran Scrolls speak repeatedly of a Teacher of Righteousness, the same one who is mentioned in the Book of Damascus. Hebrew Hymns attributed to this Teacher have also been found with the theme:

> The Jews wanted to kill me and condemn me to a place, worst among the worst. But God had other designs, I was to be saved from this fate and raised up to Him.

(viii) In 1873 an ancient document (Essenian Epistle) was found in a monastery at Alexandria. This find, composed in Latin, passed into the hands of the Freemason Society. Freemasons had a strict tradition which puts a seal of secrecy on all ancient documents. They refuse to reveal anything about these documents. Their followers and affiliates also take a grim oath of secrecy. However a German translation of the said document had already been made when the epistle was carried off by the Freemasons. From the German version an English translation was made which appeared in three successive editions. The title of the 1975 edition was An Eye Witness Account - Jesus did not Die on the Cross. In 1975 the Freemason society was compelled to declare that they had in their possession the German translation of the epistle. They also reproduced a number of copies of it for limited circulation. Only two hundred copies were produced of which copy No. 68 happens to be with the present speaker. It contains a preface written by the Grand Master, ELANA MED PA, Grand Master Temple of the White Flame, Academy of Mystic Arts, New York. There is no doubt that the Epistle is a most important document, a challenge and an invitation to all scholars.

(ix) The Church Fathers of the early centuries had some ancient traditions which are of great relevance to our subject, some of

which I quote below:
In the 2nd century, The Valentinian School of thought believed that:
(a) Jesus remained with the apostles 18 months after the Resurrection and gave fresh revelations which were presented in Esoteric books. An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, by B. F. Westcott, pp. 460-461.

A short ending to the Gospel of Mark states:
(b) And after that Jesus also himself appeared from East, and up to West, he sent out by them the sacred and uncorrupted preaching of the eternal salvation. Amen (Canon and Text of the New Testament, by C. R. Gregory, p. 511).

In the 2nd century, Bishop Irenaeus declared:
(c) The Lord went down to the parts below the earth, preaching the Gospel of his coming also to them (Ibid. p. 102).

Irenaeus further declares:
(d) He gave himself a ransom for those who had been led into Captivity. (The Library of Christian Classics, p. 385)

Epiphanius describes a prominent tradition by stating thus:
(e) Mary gone with St. John on his Journey into Asia. (The Book of Mary, by Henri Daniel Roper, p. 135.)

Bishop Irenaeus categorically believed and declared:
(f) (i) Therefore he passed through every stage of life: he was made an infant for infants, sanctifying infancy; a child among children, sanctifying those of this age, an example also to them of filial affection, righteousness and obedience; a young man among younger men, an example to them and sanctifying them to the Lord. So also amongst the older men; that he might be a perfect master for all, not solely in regard to the revelation of the truth, but also in respect of each stage of life. And then he came even

unto death. (Adv. Haer II XXII. 4. Documents of the Christian Church of Bettenson, p. 30.)

(ii) According to the early history of the church the tales current in the days of Papias, the Lord lived to a great age. (Early History of Christian Church, by Duchesne, p. 105)

(iii) That Jesus must have passed through and been subjected to all the conditions of a complete human life from birth to old age and death. (HISTORY OF DOGMA, by Dr. Adolf Harnack, pp. 277-278.)

(g) Matthew telling of his visit to the Land of Promise where the Lost Tribes dwell: (Oriental Acts of Apostles). (The Apocryphal New Testament, by M. R. James, p. 471.)

(h) Panteanus, writing in mid-2nd century, asserts he found in India a Gospel in a Hebrew Script. (The Crucible of Christianity, p. 277.)

(i) After rising from the dead, Jesus had spent eleven years with his disciples, instructing them. [(Pistis Sophia) FRAGMENT OF A FAITH FORGOTTEN, by G. R. S. Mead (U.S.A. 1960) p. 459]

According to the testimony of St. Jerome :
(j) The Son of God was with Thomas in all the places of India ... and with all the preachers of the Gospel, wheresoever they came. (The Kingdom of Christ, by Peter Bamm (London 1959) p. 223.)

The foregoing statements of the fathers of the Christian Church contain the real story of the hidden life of Jesus. But when interpreted, they assume a distorted shape. For instance, the fact that Jesus lived long and died old was transformed into the ingenious story that Jesus was crucified not when he was 33 but at the age of forty to fifty. His world-wide travels were construed as his journeys into the bowels of the earth where he had decided to go ostensibly to save the souls of the Patriarchs of Israel.

That St. Thomas accompanied Jesus during his sojourn in India was conveniently explained away by saying that it was nothing new, for Jesus always accompanied the preachers of the Gospels on their journeys. In fact, all historical evidence bearing on the life of Jesus was used to suit and save the official doctrine of the Church with amazing impunity regardless of the ridiculous interpretations this effort occasioned.

That the seal of secrecy was set on truth by the holy Church and facts were sacrificed to sustain fictions will be borne out by the following quotation which I reproduce from M. I. Finlay's book ASPECTS OF ANTIQUITY. Referring to the great Biblical Scholar Goguel, it says:

> Goguel is right to stress the implications in this connection of the fact that the earliest Christian documents form a canonical collection: What was remembered of the earliest days of Christianity passed through a kind of censorship so that there is only left for us what conformed to the doctrine of the Church when it had become fixed in one single form. Much other material was in effect thrown in the waste paper basket and disappeared. (Aspects of Antiquity, by M. I. Finley, London 1968 pp. 190-191.)

This vandalism and suppression of truth extended to Egypt in the West and to India in the East. An excerpt from Early Spread of Christianity by A. Mingana, Longmans Green & Company 1926, reproduced below will bear this out:

> Before the Synod of Diamper of 1599, there were many Syriac MSS in India, which contained an extensive biblical, liturgical, and patristic literature. The Synod, however, declared that all books which were opposed in any way whatsoever to the doctrine

> of the Church of Rome were to be burnt without pity. (p. 67).

Nag Hammadi texts too reveal a tragic situation. Writing on this, the famous weekly 'Time' says in its issue of 9.6.1975:

> The Nag Hammadi texts were packed away 16 centuries ago, perhaps to protect them from book-burning Christian opponents.

It is indeed a miracle that in spite of this continued and organised destruction and distortion of history, there should still remain a fragment here and a fragment there, even long and authentic Scrolls and Documents, which more than prove that truth will come out and that Jesus did not die on the cross.

(x) The question now arises, do we have any mention in any of the ancient Indian books of the coming of Jesus to India and his travels in this country? If Jesus really travelled to India, somewhere in ancient Indian books we should have hints of his travels. Eighty years is not a short span of time and yet it is said that the travels of Jesus in the North-west of India and Kashmir occupied him for 80 long years.

If few or no hints whatever are to be found in ancient Indian literature, we have an explanation. Indian writers and intellectuals entertained a deep prejudice against all foreigners. Alexander the Great came to India according to all agreed accounts. Yet we have no mention of his coming in the ancient Indian books. Indian historians are agreed that before the advent of the Muslim Power in India, India possessed no systematic history.[8]

There is a book named RAJA TARANGINI which is a history of Kashmir composed in Sanskirit verse by Kalhana. It was composed in the twelfth century. In the entire Sanskrit literature this is the

8 Vincent Arthur Smith: The Early History of India

one and only book which could be called a book of history. This book not only contains many legendary accounts handed down from ancient times, but also some historical material. Modern scholars have to work hard to reduce this source to a reliable historical narrative.

An interesting feature is that in Raja Tarangini of Kalhana we have a description of a man of God who wrought miracles similar to those of Jesus. His name is said to be Isana. He is credited with saving a Minister – Vazeer - from death on the cross and restoring him to life. This Minister subsequently became the ruler of Kashmir. His rule lasted for 47 years. According to Kalhana, the last Reformer in Kashmir, was this man of God Isana. In point of time he is said to belong to the first century A.D. It seems very probable indeed that the life events and episodes attributed to Isana are the life events and episodes of the life of Isa, otherwise Jesus.

The ancient books of the Hindus are called Puranas. These are 18 in number. The 9th Purana is called Bhavishya Maha Purana. This Purana has been handed down from generation to generation among the Hindus. True, like other ancient books, it has undergone changes, additions, interpolations. The additions made after the fifth century A.D. contain accounts of the coming of Jesus to India. The descriptions are pretty clear. In the Purana, we are told that there were Israelites settled in India and there is clear mention also of a prophet sent unto Israel.

Professor D. D. Kosambi, the well-known Sanskrit scholar translates:[9]

> Once, the Chief of the Sakas (Salivahana himself, their conqueror?) went to a height of the Himalayas.

9 Gabriel

There, in the land of the Huns (i.e. the Kushans) he, the powerful king, saw an auspicious man, fair in colour and clad in white garments.

Who are you?, he asked.

The other replied: Know me to be the son of God, born from a virgin's womb, preacher of the religion of the foreigners (maleachss), steadfast in following the truth.

On hearing this the king asked: What are your religious principles?

The other replied: Great King, when truth had come to an end and all morals had been lost among the infidels, I, the Masiha, arose. The goddess of the savages (dasyu), namely Ihamasi (the goddess Masi) manifested herself in terrifying disguise; and I, having reached her in the infidel fashion, attained the status of Masiha. O King, listen to that religion (of hers) which I imposed upon the infidel: Having cleansed the mind and purified the impure 'body, and having recourse to the prayer of the naigama (Holy Book), man must worship the pure Eternal. By justice, Truth, unity of mind and meditation, man must worship Isa (God) in the Sun's heaven (Suryamandala, which could also mean the sun's disk). That Lord, himself as immovable (from his course) as the Sun, always at last attracts the essence of all erring creatures. With this (message) O King, Masiha vanished; and the blissful image of Isa, the bliss-giving, being ever in my heart, my name has been established as Isa-Masiha.

Having heard these words, the king removed that infidel priest and established him in the pitiless land of the infidels. Commenting

on this D. D. Kosambi observes:

> The nucleus of the story is the legend that the 'infidel priest' called himself 'Isa-Masihas' - clearly 'Jesus the Messiah'- on which an attempt at a Sanskrit etymology has been embroidered but the Godess Masi[10] is a fiction, unknown elsewhere. The word naigama cannot be taken as referring to Hindu Scriptures and perhaps means the Bible. King Salivahana is traditionally credited with having inaugurated the present Hindu era, which begins in A.D. 78; but here he is said to have defeated the Romans and the Chinese - successes which might be claimed for a Kushan ruler, but not for any king of India proper. If St. Thomas, whose tomb is shown at Mylapore (Madras), also in Malabar and (perhaps) in Ceylon, made peregrinations to these regions, his teacher may well have travelled too; but to accept A.D. 78 as Salivahna's date would make Jesus over 80 years old at the supposed meeting. (Jesus in Rome, by Robert Graves and Joshoa Podro - London 1957: pp. 76-77).

(xi) When India was under Buddhist supremacy every saint who came after Buddha was included in the Buddhist Pantheon. Jesus came to India in search of the lost sheep of Israel performing the function of the scriptural shepherd.[11] Therefore, he came to be called Asaf or Gatherer. The Buddhists confused this with Buddhisattva and changed Joshua Asaf to Budasaf. The common people began to call him Yuz Asaf, The Book of Yuz Asaf was compiled in the medieval period. This compilation was a pure Buddhist legend. At the end of the Book, however, we have

10 Means the angel Gabriel

11 Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:23-37; John: 10:11-16.

mention of ancient Indian tradition which describe Yuz Asaf as prophet belonging to the ancient times, a prophet who came from somewhere outside India, travelled to places in India but eventually settled in Kashmir where he died and remains buried. To make all this clear, we quote from the conclusion of the Bombay Arabic edition of the 'Book of Balauhar and Budasaf' (Yuz Asaf) pp. 285-286, corresponding to pp. 182-183 of Rosen's translation:

> And he reached Kashmir, and this was the most remote place in which he ministered, and there the end of his life overtook him. And he left the world, bequeathing his heritage to a certain disciple, Ababid by name, who served him and accompanied him; he was a man perfect in all his doings. And he exhorted him and said to him: I have discovered and cherished and adorned a shrine and set therein lamps for the departed; I have gathered together the flock of the true faith which was scattered and to which I was sent. And now there draws nigh my ascension from the world, and the separation of my soul from the body. Observe, therefore, the commandments given to you and do not diverge from the truth, but hold fast to it with gratitude. And let Ababid be the leader. Afterwards he commanded Ababid to smooth out a place for him, then he stretched out his legs and lay down; and he turned his head towards the north and his face to the east, and then he died." (THE WISDOM OF BALAHAR - A Christian Legend of the Buddha, by DAVID MARSHAL LANG M.A., Ph.D.: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1957, New York, p. 37.)

Historical sources found in Kashmir point to this tomb as the tomb of Yuz Asaf, a prophet. In one manuscript[12] this tomb is clearly described as the tomb of 'Isa Rooh-u-Ilah'. This probably was the background of Qudsi Mashadi, the Court Poet of Shahjahan, the Moghal Emperor when he said:

> This is the part of earth peopled by Isa the Spirit of God. And why not? When the breeze of grace begins to blow, we inevitably recall the miracles of Jesus.

(xii) **EVIDENCE BASED ON ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS**

Ancient inscriptions are another important source of history. In Kashmir we have a hill called Takhti Suleman. On it is situated a temple. On the steps of this temple we come across two inscriptions, apparently restored to their places in the time of the Mughals. The writing on the inscriptions is mutilated but manuscript sources of ancient history of Kashmir give them out as follows:

> (When this temple was being built) Yuz Asaf proclaimed himself a prophet.
> Yuz Asaf means Jesus the prophet of Israel.[13]

These evidences we owe to the ancient literature and relics of India. They contain clear mention of the coming of Jesus to India and his travels in that country.

Frye in his monograph: The Heritage of Persia[14] mentions some 3rd century inscriptions which list up the various religious communities then flourishing in the vast Sassanian Empire, as

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12 Mohammed Yasin, M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D. MYSTERIES OF KASHMIR (SRINAGAR 1972 pp. 13-14

13 Mohammad Yasin, M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D. MYSTERIES OF KASHMIR (SRINAGAR 1972) pp. 13-14

14 Richard N. Frye, The Heritage of Persia, London (1962) p. 286 note 31

Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Nasra, Christians, Mktk and Zindik. Frye notes: It is difficult to determine what Kristiyan and Nasra designate. (p. 286).

As the Sassanian Empire covered an area stretching to Syria in the west and to north-west India in the east, it appears that the Syrian Christians were designated as Kristiyans and those of the eastern provinces as the Nasra i.e. followers of Masih Nasri.

It is interesting to note that in the vicinity of Herat (Afghanistan), is to be found a small community whose members call themselves followers of Isa, son of Mary, of Nazara, the Kashmiri. This reference is contained in a recent book Among the Dervishes by O. M. Burke:

> The followers of Isa, son of Maryam - Jesus the son of Mary - generally call themselves Moslems and inhabit a number of villages scattered throughout the Western area of Afghanistan whose centre is Herat. I had heard of them several times, but considered that they were probably the people who had been converted by European missionaries from Eastern Persia, or else that they were a relic of the time when Herat had been a flourishing bishopric of the Nestorian rite, before the Arabs conquered Persia in the seventh and eighth centuries.
>
> But, from their own accounts and what I could observe, they seem to come from some much older source.
>
> I found them through one of the deputies of the Mir of Gazarga, the descendant of Mohammad under whose protection they are. Gazarga is the shrine where Abdullah Ansar, a Sufi mystic and great local

saint, is buried in a magnificent tomb formerly much visited by the emperors of India and other notables. There must be about a thousand of these Christians. Their chief is the Abba Yahiyya (Father John) who can recite the succession of teachers through nearly sixty generations to - Isa, son of Mary, of Nazara, the Kashmiri.

According to these people, Jesus escaped from the cross, was hidden by friends, was helped to flee to India, where he had been before during his youth, and settled in Kashmir, where he is revered as an ancient teacher, Yuz Asaf. It is from this period of the supposed life of Jesus that these people claim to have got their message. (AMONG THE DERVISHES, by O. M. Burke, London 1973, p. 12)

(xiii) A twentieth century traveller Nicholus Roerich has endorsed the thesis that Asian countries and peoples possess a strong tradition describing the travels of Jesus among them. (Heart of Asia, pp. 22-23).

Similarly we have Lady Merrick's description of the evidences at Himis (Ladakh). She writes:

In Leh is the legend of Christ who is called Isa, and the monastery at Himmis holds precise documents fifteen hundred years old which tell of the days that he (Jesus) passed in Leh where he was joyously received and where he preached. (Merrick. In the World's Attic, p. 215).

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in his well known book Glimpses of World history has recorded:

All over Central Asia, in Kashmir and Ladhkh and

> Tibet, and even farther north there is stiII a strong belief that Jesus or Isa travelled about there. There is nothing inherently impossible in his doing so. (p. 86).

The Famous American authoress PEARL S. BUCK in her biography writes:

> My father always a scholar, had studied Bhuddhism for many years, among other religions of Asia, and he had written an interesting monograph on the similarities between Christianity and Bhuddism.[15]

Thus I knew rather clearly the general ideas my father had about Bhuddhism, one of these being that likeness between that religion and Christianity was not accidental but historical since it is quite possible that Jesus may have visited the Himalayan Kingdom in Nepal when he was a young man, and during the unrecorded twelve years of his life. Such tradition is widespread in Northern India and is even mentioned in Vishnu Purana, the ancient Hindu Scripture.

These quotations envisage that Jesus visited Himalayas in his early years 'before the crucifixion. It seems to me that this proposition contradicts the available legitimate evidence. There is no doubt that Jesus travelled to the Himalayas. The question is whether he was in the Himalayas before or after the crucifixion. The most credible and authentic evidence of Jesus' presence in the Himalayas is provided by the ancient Hindu scriptures the Puranas. In reply to an inquiry from the king Jesus replied that he was the Messiah that arose in a foreign land.

When Jesus was questioned by the king according to the Puranas his replies left no doubt that he was referring to the events after

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15 Ref: My several Worlds, A Personal Record, by Pearl S. Buck, N.Y., 1954, pp. 66-67

his advent and crucifixion.

A question may arise in many minds who was this king and when did he meet Jesus. The title of the king mentioned in the Puranas is Salivahana and according to the Encyclopaedia Americana 1976 Edition under the heading "India-Post Asoka India" the traditional Salivahana came to power in the early 2nd century and his name was Gautami Putra Satakarni. Thus the position was that when the said meeting between Jesus and Salivahana took place in the Himalayas, Jesus would be approximately over 100 years old. This is further corroborated by the revelation to the Holy Prophet of Islam that his life would be half that of the age attained by Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Putting together the evidence from different sources, we can more or less reconstruct the life of Jesus after the crucifixion.

Jesus Christ received a new lease of life after deliverance from the cross. But in Canaan he had to move about incognito. He continued to meet his followers however. We have descriptions of these meetings in Corinthians First Epistle of Paul, Chapter XV, and in the Nag-Hammadi Gospels.

The Roman and Parthian empires were separ0ated by the river Euphrates. On the other side of Euphrates in Parthia were settled Israelite tribes, for instance in Adiabne, Nasibis and the Edessa. When Jesus could no longer move about incognito in Canaan, he crossed the river Euphrates and reached Edessa and Nasibis. It was easy from here to travel over Iraq and visit the cities and townships of this part of the Middle East and meet Israelite pockets where they could be found. Naturally he must have delivered his message and his teachings to them. We have

a tradition attributed to the Holy Prophet of Islam (on whom be peace and blessings of God) according to which the Holy Prophet in a vision saw that Jesus Christ had been to the land of Hijaz, that he entered the valley of Mecca for pilgrimage to the Kaaba, and that he used his own words of Response (Talbih) for the occasion. (Akhbar-i-Mecca, 223 A.H. p. 39: by Al-Azraqi) Jesus had been telling some of his followers that he was due to come back to them again. He exhorted them to stay in Jerusalem. He did return for a while but migrated again, this time for ever. His special mission in fact was to reach the nine and a half tribes of Israel who had become lost among the people of the east.

The lost sheep of Israel had to be traced. They had travelled from Babylon to Iran, Afghanistan, North-West India and to Kashmir and Kashghar. They had become dispersed and were now living in far flung places. Jesus entered Iran from Babylon. On the way he stopped in Herat and from Herat he made his way into Afghanistan. He passed through the Khyber Pass and entered Gandhara Valley. He roamed over places around Taxila and over the Punjab, entered Kashmir and went as far as Ladakh, Tibet and Nepal. There were Israelite pockets, spread over the north-west of India. Jesus reached all of them and did whatever he could to have them settled properly. Gondaphorus, the Parthian king and the king of the Sakas, honoured Jesus one after the other and made obeisance to him. The result of all this was that the political climate became congenial for Jesus and the Israelites. Plans were thought out for their settlement. This work of settlement was completed under the care and leadership of Jesus himself. The people of Israel began to prosper. They became more settled, and gathered from all directions in the valley of Kashmir, which had been chosen for them.

In short, Jesus Christ spent 80 years of his life in the NorthWest of India. He travelled extensively about and lived to 125 years, twice the age of the Holy Prophet of Islam (on whom be peace and blessings of Allah).

Before closing, it appears necessary to deal with an important question which runs like this:
The ministry of Jesus Christ in Palestine lasted only a few years with the result that Christianity made such swift progress that there are 800 million Christians in the world today. We can trace them up to their earliest days. Ever since the time of the catacombs up to this day, hundreds of thousands of historical proofs show that Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) spent only two or three years in Palestine where he preached his message. The fruits of his brief ministry in Palestine are before us all. On the other hand, Jesus Christ left almost no trace of his work in the North-western part of India despite the fact that he spent more or less 80 years of his life there.

What is the explanation of this seeming contradiction?

To answer this question, we have to keep in mind a phenomenon of the history of religions. In the first century, Taxila and Kashmir were the greatest centres of Buddhism, whereas today Buddhism has vanished completely from these areas.

Another example can be quoted of Islam in Spain which was forced out of that country by violence. This leads to the conclusion that a dominating religion can be wiped out of certain regions as a result of compulsion or even by peaceful propaganda by another religion.

It is a historical fact that Persia was governed by the Sassanians in the third century. The Persian kingdom extended from the

North-West of India up to the Euphrates.

The Bani Israel inhabited in great numbers both Persia and North-western India. There were followers of Jesus Christ known as Nasira. Inscriptions found recently in Persia bear testimony to this fact. These inscriptions, traced down to the third century, clearly mention that in the bounds of the Persian Kingdom the Number One community was "Yhwdy", the second largest religious community was of Buddhism, the third was Hinduism, fourth was the Nasira and the fifth the Christian. (I. Korter 273-293 A.D.). As the dominant figure in the Zoroastrian Church as stated in the Kabe-ye Zendusht inscription of Karter, he claims credit for the suppression of Non-zoroastrian religious communities in Iran "and Jews, Buddhists, Brahmans, Nagoreans, Christians ..." (Encyclopaedia Britanica: Persia).

Scholars are surprised at the separate mention of Nasira and Christian.

It is clear from the New Testament that the followers of Jesus in Antioch (Syria) were described as Christians. Thus the Christians of the inscriptions of Persia are Syrian Christians.

The followers of Jesus in Persia and North-west India were described after Jesus of Nazareth as Nasira. The Syrian Christians were taken prisoners during the Sassanian reign and settled in Persia. Within the State Boundaries thus there were two sects of the followers of Jesus, the Nasira and the Christians.

The inscriptions further reveal that the Great Magi of the Zoroastrian religion in Persia destroyed the centres of the other religions and gave supremacy to the Zoroastrian religion.

The Persian history supports the contents of these inscriptions. The Persian Christians were persecuted at different intervals

during a period of one hundred years. This resulted in the suppression of Christianity in the North-western part of India and Persia which was subsequently absorbed by other creeds. The newly-found inscriptions are the greatest proof of the presence of Nagoreans in this area. During the Persian persecutions, this community slipped to the background. When in the middle of the second century, a great Christian scholar came from Alexandria to the North-west of India, he found there Christians of the Hebrew race. They possessed a gospel in Hebrew language and characters. This evidence of Church history and the Persian inscriptions clearly show that the sun of Christianity did rise in these regions but then it set and it was assimilated by other religions and became forgotten as an independent entity.

Finally, there is another aspect to this question. Jesus Christ found acceptance in the lands in which the lost tribes of Israel were settled, and it is a very significant historical fact that while only a few of the descendants of the Jews in Judea, who rejected him, accepted the Holy Prophet of Islam in whose advent the prophecy of Moses in Deut 18:18 was fulfilled, the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel in the lands of the diaspora all accepted the Holy Prophet of Islam and became Muslims.

This was a striking fulfilment of the warning that Jesus had conveyed to the Jews of Judea that if they rejected him the kingdom of God would be taken from them and would be transferred to another people. The Jews of the diaspora who accepted him did not become subject to the penalty imposed upon the Jews of Judea who had rejected Jesus, and their descendants continued to enjoy the bounties of the Kingdom of God. Many of them became rulers in their own lands and all of them in due time were admitted to the spiritual bounties of the kingdom of God when

they accepted the Prophet of Islam.[16]

16 Deliverance from the cross by Muhammad Zafarulla Khan. p. 104

The International Foundation for the Holy Shroud

A STATEMENT by KURT BERNA

THIS is a statement by Hans Naber, also known as Kurt Berna, who discovered from the Holy Shroud of Jesus, kept in Turin, that Jesus did not die on the cross.

This thesis is sent from Zurich, Switzerland, and is prepared to be read at the International Conference to be held in London in June 1978 on the Deliverance of Jesus from the cross.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, Jews, Christians and Muslims!

It is your right to know who has written this thesis and why is the writer not present here himself. It was I who discovered from the Holy Shroud of Turin that Jesus did not die on the cross. I am a Roman Catholic Christian and at present I am inside a prison in West Germany.

I propose to divulge and make full and clear disclosure. All the three events are connected, that is to say, who is the author of this thesis, why is he not himself present here before you and why is he in prison.

In November 1948 I began to gain knowledge in respect of the Holy Shroud. For 28 years I fought and struggled to obtain an insight and perceptive knowledge about these facts and in 1976 they threw me in a prison. What was I accused of? They said: He took money for his work, and for his publications about

Jesus did not die on the cross, and that these funds were used for other purposes. The simple truth is that the Foundation which I head in USA and Switzerland is also doing business in the US commodity market. This is not unusual; like many other US foundations, the profits of the business are used for cultural publications. Of course all the funds were Foundation funds, but the publications by me were also Foundation Publications and not my own private publications. I am in jail. Please believe me I am not guilty, everything was planned by officials to put an end to the discovery that Jesus did not die on the cross. They think that if they killed the discoverer or presented him as an impostor they will destroy the discovery. But they have failed.

I have been thinking for over 25 years why it was particularly in the city of Stuttgart in West Germany that in the year 1947 Jesus himself chose to disclose that he did not die on the cross. Now I understand; because in no other town of the whole world a man has to go to prison with an accusation like this without any evidence. Jesus knew this. These people in Stuttgart, my home town, have made me a martyr and martyrdom does bring publicity and with the publicity the truth spreads around the world that Jesus did not die on the cross.

It is an undeniable fact that a very interesting book by a US author would not have seen the light of day if I did not stand in the Law Court in Stuttgart. The world news agencies like The Associated Press, The United Press International and Reuters circulated this news around the world. Consequently in Florida, USA, the religious editor of the MIAMI NEWS, Mr. Robert K. Wilcox read the news for the first time in his life about the existence of a shroud and the discoveries made from this shroud disclosing that Jesus did not die on the cross. He, therefore, wrote that

book. On the first page of this book he describes how he came to the theme. Apart from this, newspapers around the world also published details of these discoveries. Therefore, you need not worry about my being in jail; a discoverer of truth has to run the risk of such unpleasantness. But I hope you do now understand why I am not present here in person.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Jews, Christians and Muslims!

I as a Christian must state: There can be no doubt that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian who was born in 1835 and died in 1908 was a real and true messenger of God. Indeed a messenger of God for all Muslims and for the whole world.

Please be patient. As a Christian to speak like this I have acceptable evidence and important facts. It has been said that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Founder of the Ahmadiyyat Movement in Islam, for the first time, under divine inspiration, announced to the world in 1890, that Jesus did not die on the cross.

Now, if Jesus died on the cross then Hazrat Ahmad is nobody. But if Jesus did not die on the cross, and there is sufficient logical evidence for this proposition, then it must be admitted that Hazrat Ahmad was a true and real messenger of God. Again, as a Christian I must accept this, because I can think logically and also we must be honest in spiritual arguments. Hazrat Ahmad had, in historical research definition, the birthright for the enunciation that Jesus did not die on the cross and that he died in Srinagar, Kashmir, India.

The proof of the fact that Jesus did not die on the cross is the Shroud of Christ's own body, and it does stand for that fact. It is a scientific reasoning by an objective and irrefutable piece of test;

because 28 bloodstains, extracted from over 100 on the shroud, show with scientific proof that the heart of Jesus was still beating when he was taken down from the cross. A corpse cannot bleed in this way as Jesus did after crucifixion and he was not a corpse. There are now clear and positive proofs that Jesus was placed in the sepulchre after the crucifixion and this testimony is given by his own burial linen. To those who are particularly interested in this aspect of the study I suggest that they read my findings. I do not propose to discuss here in detail the information and knowledge derived from the shroud, since almost everything has been written and published in great detail in my first book in 1954 and my last book in 1976 in German language. On final facts I recommend the American book titled Christ did not Perish on the Cross, published by the Exposition Press Inc. of New York. The full address may be obtained from the secretary to the Conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Jews, Christians and Muslims!

My thoughts for this International Conference do have other important facets. They revolve around the statement that Jesus did not die on the cross. This should prove interesting on the one hand to all human beings and also on the other hand provide proof that Hazrat Ahmad was a true messenger of God. I present to you an extraordinary case, you may have to think about it again and again and perhaps for the rest of your lives. I, therefore, request your complete attention.

I have known the Ahmadiyya Community for 20 years. After my 1957 publication in Zurich, in 1958, I met Ahmadi Muslims and had discussions with some of them regarding the Holy Shroud and it seemed to me that my discovery proved to be lucky for them. I thought to myself what kind of people are

these Ahmadiyya Muslims? This was so because most Christians, including myself at this time, knew nothing or not much about the Muslims. Thereafter, year by year, parallel with my mission to spread around the world the findings of the Holy Shroud, I studied Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. The Holy Quran in clear terms states that Jesus or Isa survived the crucifixion. Ambiguous or not, certainly Islam does not want a dead Jesus on the cross. Since this contradicts the most fundamental and cherished Christian belief regarding Jesus Christ, hence for many centuries the Christians and Muslims have been busy killing each other. But I have to accept that the Quran wins; the Christians lose their case because Jesus in fact survived the cross and his own shroud is the most reliable and leading witness of that.

The Muslims traditionally believed that according to their reading of the Quran Jesus was taken up into heaven in his physical body. The Christians also have a similar belief and they call it the Ascension of Jesus. Thus these beliefs remained fixed for many centuries until the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Hazrat Ahmad with his spiritual power and on authority called Divine Revelation announced to the world:
Jesus came as a messenger of God, did his duty, did not die on the cross, died a natural death, and his body is buried in Srinagar, Kashmir.

In the last years of the 19th and first years of the 20th century, Hazrat Ahmad, as a Prophet and a World Reformer, could not win universal support, because both the Muslims and Christians opposed him fiercely and rejected him. The Muslims were inter alia hostile because he announced that Jesus died a natural death and lay buried in Srinagar, while their traditional belief was that Jesus had risen bodily to heaven. The Christians were equally

hostile and felt deep aversion and antagonism not only to the natural death but also to his categoric statement that Jesus did not die on the cross. I should now give you an account of what I personally witnessed in this respect. After a brief introduction I shall give an account of the events which took place in connection with the above apparently incompatible beliefs about Jesus. It is a report of what I myself saw and you may think about it what you may. But I state what I saw.

I have already stated that my investigations on the Holy Shroud started around November 1948. These began after I had read in a Christian weekly about the Shroud for the first time in July 1948. An excellent account was published in 1977 by the aforementioned US religious editor Robert K. Wilcox, in his book called Shroud published by the Macmillan Publishing Co., New York and also Collier Macmillan Publishers in London. Wilcox, in his book has set out many facts and events around the Holy Shroud and he also reports facts about what I saw. Permit me to reiterate here and state what I saw and which I can prove. The description of what I saw and brief representations of my discoveries about the Holy Shroud form the basis of the book called Shroud. It is better that I should give you his words; not all but some of the details mentioned, and you should bear in mind that because he is a newspaper editor, details are collated in order of importance. Let us start from page 42 of his Shroud where Wilcox writes:
The person who exploded the secrecy of the 1969 Shroud Commission - he said he had been tipped off by an official in Turin who wished to remain anonymous, was Kurt Berna, a German Sindonologist. On June 16th 1969, the first day of the study, Berna sent leaflets and releases charging that the Church was going to alter or destroy the shroud. One reason for his concern was that the shroud proved that Jesus did not die on

the cross. News media in Turin and Rome picked the story up and sent it out over the global wire service. The Vatican quickly denied the charges and the story seemed to die down.

On July 28th, forty days after the secret study had been completed, Berna showed up at the Vatican gates with a briefcase full of documents and a photographer. Monsignor Charles Moeller, Under Secretary of the Vatican's chief agency concerning doctrine, invited Berna inside the complex, but when he was photographed accepting Berna's documents, the story went around the world. United Press International headed its story: The President of the Foundation for the Holy Shroud in Switzerland submitted documents to the Vatican which he said prove that Christ was alive when he was removed from the cross. This contradicts the belief of the Roman Catholic Church. It would mean that Christ recovered from wounds and did not rise from death itself. There was no comment from the Vatican. The Associated Press story had the same tone and substance: A German author who contends Jesus Christ did not die on the cross has challenged the Vatican to re-examine the Shroud believed to have wrapped Christ's body. The leading paragraph said: Kurt Berna, author of four books on the Shroud, says the bloodstains on the cloth prove Christ was still alive when taken down from the cross. He went to the Vatican yesterday and gave a 20 page pamphlet containing photographs and documentations to Monsignor Charles Moeller. The Vatican made no immediate comment.

Again the story seemed to die down, at least for five months. Then in December 1969 Berna got another tip from a source he refused to identify; a high Vatican official was reputed to have said that the Holy Church cannot be split and teach that our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross to free us from our sins, and at the

same time worship a shroud in which no corpse ever lay. A radical solution must be found here.

Allow me an interruption here. Looking back from 1978, this "radical solution" perhaps was to throw me, Hans Naber called Kurt Berna, in prison and to take away my honour and dignity in the belief that this will annihilate my discovery. There is ample circumstantial evidence in West Germany to support this; but then that is another theme. Let us continue with Wilcox.

Berna called the Zurich branch of Reuters, the English news service. The Shroud. was going to be destroyed, he told the Reuter's reporter. "for how else are the words radical solution to be understood?" Vatican officials had already tried to harm the Shroud once, he added, and this time he had a quote to prove it. Reuters convinced of the reasonableness of his previous stories. sent this one to its subscribers around the world. At last the Turin authorities were forced to admit what they had previously denied. On January 6th, 1970, Cardinal Pellegrino released through his curia a short statement to the effect that on June 16th 1969 the Shroud casket had been opened, and that no, the cloth had not been destroyed; and that experts have been asked to make suggestions how better the holy relic might be preserved for possible future studies.

Were you there when they photographed my Lord? was the title of an article in the August 1971 issue of Esquire magazine. In it journalist Karl E. Meyer recounted not only the ecclesiastical cover-up of the 1969 Shroud Commission and Kurt Berna's theory on the non-death of Jesus on the cross but also most of the highlights in the history of the Shroud.

In 1973, when Kurt Berna, the German Sindonologist who blew the secrecy of the 1969 Shroud Commission, heard that I

was researching the Shroud with a view to writing this book, he insisted on flying from Stuttgart to London. First of all his real name was Hans Naber. For a variety of reasons he occasionally used Kurt Berna and John Reban. In 1940 he was drafted into the German army and because he showed a talent for writing, he became a reporter -writer for his company, a job which consisted mainly of writing up internal matters for the unit.

Naber was sent to France and he took part in the battles of Normandy. When the German army was thrown into disarray by the advancing Allied armies, he deserted, escaped capture by changing clothes and made his way back to Stuttgart. After the surrender most Germans had to scrounge for the necessities. Naber was no exception. He turned to black marketeering, which furnished him a modest living, until 1947 when Jesus appeared to him.

Around 4 a.m. on February 16th 1947, lying awake in his parents' home, Hans Naber saw on the wall of his bedroom a technicolour film of The Passion. Included in it were the scenes of the trial, crucifixion, entombment, resurrection and ascension. "They were so real," he later told a magazine "that I was under the impression they were actually happening. It went on for seven days. I could not eat or sleep. The only thing I could do was drink water. I could not get out of the bed." On the seventh day with Naber "physically exhausted and on the verge of madness," something even more unusual happened.

"On one wall of my room, at a stroke, a very intense light appeared and it diffused through the whole room. Within it Jesus appeared. He was tall, he had long hair, a beard, a moustache. It was very clear light, eerie, but at the same time not blinding, permitting a clear vision of him. He was dressed in a white tunic and there

were no wounds on his body." What Jesus said made such an impact on Naber that he picked up a pen and wrote it down as though someone were guiding his hand. In essence the message was as follows:

> "I did not die on the cross. The wounds on my hands and feet took away my strength. The pains burned my body.
>
> The beast opened up my side. Its lance was thrust from below into my chest, it did not hit my heart. My side bled. My body was lifeless but not dead. My heart was still beating, my wounds were treated with balm. Joseph of Arimathea laid me in a grave of rocks. My body could rest. My heart grew stronger. Then I rose again."

While Jesus was talking to him, as Naber wrote on the paper, Naber could recall each item in vivid close-up, the most vivid of which were the last words of Jesus:

> "I am Jesus whom men crucified. You, Hans, have seen that I did not die on the cross. You must render testimony of this fact."

Then Jesus was gone.

Naber slept for three days and, revived from the ordeal. quit the black market and began giving fervent witness to the truth which had been revealed to him. Neue Zeitung, an occupation army newspaper published by the Americans for German civilians, published in 1947 an interview with Naber. Most readers did not take the story seriously, some readers were outraged to think he would challenge the fact that Christ died on the cross. He needed proof, Naber said, and not long thereafter, he heard of the shroud of Turin for the first time.

In 1973, when Naber and I met in London, he filled me in on what happened next. A priest friend gave him a book on the shroud by R. W. Hynek, a Czechoslovakian doctor who had done work on the possible causes of Christ's death. When he came to the chapter stating that all doctors who had studied the photographs at length believed it held a corpse, he stopped. If the shroud had wrapped a dead man, he realized, then his vision could not be true. He would have to admit he was imagining things, perhaps even hallucinating. Naber could not accept either of these conclusions. So he bought all the books he could on the shroud, as well as life-size blow-ups of the 1931 Enrie photographs.

Poring over the apparent bloodstains on the shroud, he told me, he suddenly recalled an incident in the war. "It was in 1942 on the home front. There had been an automobile accident in which a man in our company had been killed. As the company writer I was to go to the autopsy room and make the report. I was standing there with my sargent. The doctor made a cut on the man, but no blood came out. I was surprised and asked the sargent why this was so. He replied he did not know. We asked the doctor and he said that corpses do not bleed. They can bleed a little, a few drops maybe, but not in large quantities.

"And so while I was looking at the shroud pictures and all the blood on the shroud I remembered what the doctor had said. Corpses do not bleed. And then realized here was my proof. The body in the shroud was covered with blood. Yet corpses do not bleed. The body could not have been a corpse. It must still have been alive when put in the shroud. Otherwise how could the blood have gotten on it? The heart must still have been pumping when they put Jesus in the shroud."

Later Naber qualified his statement. Corpses, as the doctor

had said, could bleed a little, but not in the amount shown on the shroud around the scalp and on the hands and arms. both feet and so on. Such copious exudations could only have been pumped by a living heart. Still later Naber received confirmations of this theory from another doctor, W. B. Primrose, a former senior anaesthetist at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. In an article entitled Jesus's Survival from the Cross, Primrose used, among others. the argument that corpses do not bleed.

Reflecting on his seven day vision, Naber made another discovery. He saw the tip of the lance, which had been thrust up into the side of Jesus, sticking out of the left pectoral muscle. In other words, according to his vision, the lance tip had not come to rest within the chest cavity as most historical, medical and theological experts believed; it had emerged several inches above the left nipple. Peering at the pectoral area on his shroud photos, he even thought he could see the tiny wound mark. It was circular and could be differentiated from the marks of the scourging. which were straight and smaller.

By drawing a straight line from the point of entry on the right side between the fifth and sixth ribs, which was Barbefs hypothesis and which was quoted by Hyneck, through the lungs to the exit wound at the left pectoral muscle, Naber had what appeared to be a lance-path that missed the heart. He promptly went to hospital where he had an X-ray taken with a simulated lance laid across the chest cavity with the lance-path that missed the top of his heart by approximately three inches.

Now there was no question in his mind that his vision had been correct in all its details. He began to search for other supporting evidence, especially in the Scriptures. "Nowhere in the Old Testament does it say that the Messiah had to die, or would die

on the cross" he said, and in support of this he cited verses from the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah.

The resurrection was just the resuscitation. Christ may have appeared dead when he was taken down from the cross, but in reality he was still alive. His breathing and other life signs may have stopped, but enough oxygen was still circulating in his blood to keep vital centres such as the brain alive. Once in the tomb the calm allowed him to revive.

Here I end the Wilcox report about the backgrounds.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Jews, Christians and Muslims!

I thought it was necessary to give brief details of the background in order to understand the explanation of the ascension of Jesus and the possible tomb of Christ's body in Srinagar, Kashmir.

In 1947 when I saw the vision there was no written record of the shroud. All the evidence to confirm what I had seen started later emerging one after the other, year after year. out of the shroud of Jesus himself. The most meaningful and demonstrative evidence of the truth of events that were shown to me in Stuttgart, is the miraculous discoveries from Jesus Christ's own burial shroud.

I have asked myself, why then what I saw in this real vision like a technicolour film about the ascension of Jesus should also not be true? At the time, in 1947, I was 25 years of age and I did not entirely grasp the significant implications of the ascension as it appeared to me in the vision. Indeed it has taken many years before I could perceive and absorb its meaning.

And this is what I saw. Hundreds of people talking and walking towards a green tract of land. The land was strikingly green, and there were hedges scattered over it. Jesus was there. And Jesus was there after his crucifixion because I could see the healed

wounds on his wrist. Jesus was speaking to the people and still more people kept coming.

After a while Jesus looked strained, perhaps tired by a long speech. He then walked away with two men. But it seemed to me that this was not the end of the session because another man now began to speak to the crowd who were either sitting or standing around. Jesus, with the two men, was walking towards the hedges and then I saw him lying down on the grass more or less behind a hedge. The two men sat down near him. From the manner of Jesus I formed the impression that it was not the first time that Jesus had rested in this green region. Everything looked normal and nothing was unnatural. Please be attentive. Suddenly and abruptly a red dressed man sprang up, touched the two men sitting around Jesus and pointed up to heaven. Swiftly and rather in a funny manner the crowd of people stood up, some ran away while others kept standing and most of them looked upwards. A wind blew back and forth.

Now I cannot say what the crowd saw. But I definitely saw two bodies of Jesus. I saw one body of Jesus being elevated absolutely in the air, it was moving upwards, very slowly, but not motionless in the air. I think there was no mystery because I imagine the crowd of people had also seen Jesus rising upwards too.

But at the same time I also saw that Jesus continued resting, lying on the grass behind the hedge and the two men were still sitting there. These two men did not strike me as either disturbed or distressed and they did not much care about the events which were taking place about sixty or seventy yards away. Later, when most of the crowd had gone, a few men went to join the group of Jesus and they sat down while Jesus rested.

Then I saw Jesus wake up, stand up and all the others also stood

up. Jesus then walked away with these men, six or seven in number. There was nothing extraordinary in their manner, they walked away talking. And yet at the same time I had also seen, with the rest of the crowd, another visible body of Jesus being elevated upwards towards the sky. Without any doubt I had seen two bodies of Jesus at the same time. An amazing claim but true.

Certainly there were many more details within these events which I have now forgotten. With respect, you must appreciate that now it is 1978 and this vision occurred in 1947, more than 30 years ago. But I cannot fail to recollect the two bodies of Jesus. The very pleasant green region with the hedges has not escaped my memory. And I cannot forget the confusion in the crowd when the body of Jesus started elevating upwards and of course I am unable to lose sight of the scene when later Jesus walked away with his group on this earth. All these episodes were part of the same 1947 vision of mine in Stuttgart where it was revealed to me that Jesus did not die on the Cross and later the integrity of this vision has been confirmed by the scientific evidence made available by Jesus's own shroud. Therefore the established authenticity of my vision has given me courage to report here, at this International Conference, the ascension event because it must have the same reliability as the revelation that Jesus did not die on the Cross.

Please permit me to explain that in 1947 I could not understand or appreciate the "two body fact". I had recently returned from the second world war and after my vision I had to face considerable agitation with the fact of "did not die on the Cross" because I myself as a Christian had learnt to the contrary. I stood alone among 800 million Christians with the belief "did not die on the cross". Thus I did not have adequate opportunity to investigate

the "two bodies of Jesus" which featured in my vision.

But fortunately I was heard. All through the 30 years since my vision I obtained reasonable attention. I was listened to here, listened to there, was read and so on. And since then I have come across many theories including the theory of the atomic sciences. My attention was drawn to the theories which state that there are "worlds one inside the other". In fact up to seven worlds and that each human being has seven bodies "one inside another" and for each of the seven worlds one body. This may of course be funny, very funny, but for our discussion we need only two.

For two worlds "one inside the other" and for two bodies "one inside the other" there is a real possibility because the modern atomic science gives a scientific reference to the minimum existence of two worlds "one inside the other." There are actual scientific proofs and announcements for the evidence and logical deductions for the existence of a minimum of two bodies for human beings, one inside the other, each for one of the two existing worlds, one inside the other. If we now consistently think, without prejudice, all these facts and scientific reference, permit for this cool statement:
The Muslims and Christians are both correct in their beliefs; the body of Jesus did arrive in heaven. However. we will call this world "inside the other." And there can be no doubt now that Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian made a valid claim and more so within scientific proofs that Jesus did not die on the cross, that he died a natural death and that his body is buried in Srinagar, Kashmir. The body of flesh and bones, of course, had to remain inside this world. For an explanation of these mysterious facts, God, naturally, had to send a messenger and particularly so when the time had come to tell mankind that Jesus did not die on the cross.

And He sent Hazrat Ahmad with his Successors.

There may be extensive differences of opinion in the world of Islam but there cannot be real contradictions. The problem exists only because there is not sufficient interpretation or understanding of the Quran. The Quran gives Muslims instructions regarding all sciences including the atomic science. The atomic science demands that each body has to remain inside the other for the body competent world. Now precisely I had seen two bodies of Jesus in my vision, one was being elevated to the heaven, the other remained on this earth and was later seen walking. Why not to Kashmir?

I am not anybody. Apart from my 1947 vision, I hope I will always be remembered as the discoverer from the Holy Shroud that Jesus did not die on the Cross, an everlasting discovery. This revelation was made in the same vision where also the two bodies of Jesus Christ were shown to me.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

LADISLAV FILIP M.D.

Ladislav Filip, MD, was born in 1898 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He graduated in medicine from Charles University, Prague and then followed post-graduate courses at the universities of Nancy and Paris.

He founded his own clinic and was its director until it was incorporated into the State health foundation. In 1946 he became assistant professor of pathology at Charles University, Prague, and then chief physician of the state sanatorium.

He worked in the Resistance Movement during the war and spent two years in concentration camps. After the war he became Mayor of his town. His study of the historical Jesus began in 1956, since when he has presented papers at the Oriental Institution of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and also at Charles University.

New View-points on Jesus Activity Beyond Palestine

by LADISLAV FILIP M.D.

The biography of Jesus seems to me to have been somewhat neglected by rationalist historians. They failed mainly because of the Roman-Byzantic Great Schism. West European Christianity was. by a wall of dogmatism and intolerance, kept aloof from many sources that could have offered it valuable information about the life of Jesus.

The great theologist Rudolf Bultmann summed the situation up by saying that we know next to nothing about the historical Jesus from Christian sources.

This symposium, so appropriately organised by the Ahmadiyya Movement, presents an opportunity of throwing more historical light on the life and conduct of this extraordinary personality.

I

If we succeed in proving that Jesus was still alive after the year 35 AD. it would be clear that he survived the agony of the cross.

That this was so is testified to even by Christians sources. First, in the Acts of the Apostles 25:19, we find the trial of Paulus by the Roman governor Festus described. Paul was accused by the Jews, "But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be

alive." This solemn trial took place in the presence of King Agrippa II, and the chief captains and principal men of the city. Its historical importance can hardly be doubted.

The second Christian testimony reports that Jesus was alive at the end of the first century. It refers to Ignatius, the second bishop of Antioch. When escorted to Rome to be thrown to the beasts he wrote a letter to the community of Christians of Smyrna saying "that he (Jesus) is in flesh since his resurrection, I both know and believe."

Both these Christian testimonies show that Jesus still lived at those times and hence that he did not die on the cross.

II

Let us now deal with the question of the so-called "Parusy that did not take place" - Die ausgebliebene Parusie of the German theology.

In the Christian religion parusy means the coming back, or the second advent of Christ from heaven. It is for them a warrant and hope for a just reward for their life waited for in eternity. Parusy is promised in Matthew 24:27; For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. This belief was so eagerly held after the departure of Jesus from Palestine, that the apostle Peter felt obliged to tone it down in his second letter (2P 3, 4.)

The Jewish apocalyptic texts show that the Jews rather expected the Messiah to install first his kingdom of bliss and abundance for one thousand years before the Last Judgment would take place.

According to me, this firm belief in his return was based on his own words given in John 14:2-3: In my Father's house are many

mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

The followers of Jesus expected patiently the fulfillment of his promise which had such a near term in Luke 9:27; But I (Jesus) tell you of a truth, there are some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God.

But not even their sons lived to see it. Both Paul and Peter felt therefore that the words of Jesus had to be explained to believers in a sense so as not to create discontent because the parusy did not take place. This theological turn was easy to perform: the promised mansions were raised from earth to heaven. An agreeable future is easily accepted and trusted. The return of Jesus and the installation of his kingdom of affluence was prophesied even in the 15th century.

The Christian believers of the 20th century still ask when will Christ return to earth? On this point a theological discussion about how to explain this, developed in Switzerland in the thirties. The leading theologian Fritz Buri summed up the discussion by suggesting: first to study and explain the historical situation of those times; next to discuss how the contemporaries understood and felt it; and finally to use such a historical basis when counselling in Christ's name the believers in their actual troubles and hopes.

A very probable explanation of this question seems to me to be the following one: John's words about Jesus going to look for a place of refuge were very similar to those of the President of my country Eduard Benes in the year 1938, after the fateful sentence of Munich against my fatherland. President Benes, a defeated statesman, had at that time to look around for a shelter and a

place for himself and his suite in order to be able ultimately to start a campaign of liberation. Such a situation was destined to confront many political leaders in this century.

So do I understand the words of John not as metaphysics but as a mention of a historic event. We know that the author of John's gospel differs from the synoptic ones by what is called "pneumatism". If we manage to remove this distortion we can get welcome new information even from this source. None of the synoptics mentions e.g. Jesus considering going out of the reach of Rome eastward and continuing his mission there.

The scholar of history should then ascertain whether there was any real hope of a shelter for Jesus out of the reach of Rome. It was then the capital of an overwhelming power and his supporters had hardly any hope of finding a refuge anywhere. But J. Rawlinson does not agree with the famous historian Gibbon on the "long arm of Roman influence." In his opinion the Parthian empire was larger than that of Rome and in the six wars waged among them, only once did Rome win a persuasive victory.

Fortunately enough priests did not have in Parthia as great influence as the Jewish ones had in Palestine. The Parthians were tolerant in religion and therefore the Jewish diaspore was in Mesopotamia in full bloom. Jesus could have expected a good reception: First, from the government because the Parthians did help the Maccabeans a hundred years before and because Jesus was now an enemy of their enemies. Secondly, he would be welcome to the people because of his bringing a message of love. peace and transcendental hope.

But after the year 70 A.D. Jerusalem being destroyed, Jesus could no longer think of any political return to Palestine.

The first refuge of Jesus was in the traditional place of Jewish exiles, that is Damascus, probably among the Essenes of the Community of the New Covenant. But soon Jesus had to feel the hatred of the Jewish hierarchy. It hired Saul to kidnap Jesus and bring him back to Golgotha. This persecution did not stop even after the victory of Jesus over Saul as can be deduced from the advice of Abu Huariah: O Jesus, move from one place to another. lest thou shouldst be recognised and persecuted!

As apparently Jesus was not safe in Damascus. his hosts tried to find for him a shelter more reliable. The range of the then political situation in Mesopotamia can give us an idea whether Jesus' hopes were realistic.

Although a peace had been signed between Rome and Parthia by king Fraates IV, for a period of one hundred years, reaching to 36 A.D., the Romans mingled in the dynastic quarrels of Parthia so that Artabanus III had to oppose their interventions. Nevertheless King Volagases had soon after to meet them in open war.

Under Artabanus Jesus had the best hopes because a Jew, by the name of Asinai, was installed in the satrapy of Babylonia. His adventurous career is described by Josephus Flavius in Antiq. 18, 12. For fifteen years was Asinai's rule excellent but then he was poisoned by his sister-in-law. His brother Anilai ruled then but as a brigand, was defeated and killed. A terrific pogrom of Jews in Seleukia followed. So vanished the possibility of Jesus' refuge in Babylonia about 40 A.D.

A report of Jesus' second potential shelter in Mesopotamia is preserved in the apocryphic correspondence of Jesus and King Abgar IV of Eclessa. Probably this is not a genuine document, yet it is worth studying. It is reported in the Church History of Eusebius who claims having got it from the archives of Edessa.

May be that Bishop Kune of Edessa, trying to raise the prestige of the Christian community by this pious falsehood had it written according to a local tradition about some negotiations that had taken place between Damascus and Edessa on behalf of Jesus. The letter does not boast of any splendid success. Its point is only an unaccepted invitation. I feel this modesty to be strong evidence in favour of the historicity of such negotiations.

The third place where Jesus could have hope of a kind reception was the kingdom of Adiabene. The Jewish proselytes, the well known and esteemed king Izates and his mother Helene sat on the throne. Both are historically well documented.

The historian could now confidently answer the question of Fritz Buri which was the historical basis of the belief in Jesus coming back, in his Parusy, and why it was not realised.

It would be as follows: Jesus had lost his political campaign in Palestine for the throne of Jerusalem. Being the grandson of Herod the Great and having inherited the right to the throne, he hoped to be able to institute the Kingdom of God on earth without any help of swords or daggers from the Zealots. Therefore, he resolved to gather the lost sheep of Israel and at the same time to preach his own teaching abroad. He meant to maintain the law of Moses without the Mosaic claim of the Jewish monopoly of salvation. But the sorry political developments in Palestine, ending with the cruel first war of the Jews against Rome frustrated his plan. This hindered him from "coming back" and join his followers in Palestine. This is why his Parusy could not take place.

III

The third point of my paper concerns the medieval legend of the "Travelling Jew" or the "Errant Jew," Ahasverus or Buttadeo.

The origin of this legend has not been explained till today. His origin can be first traced in the Chronicle of Matthew of Paris who died in 1259. Its text speaks of an Armenian Bishop telling in England the story of a man called Josephus Cartaphilus. This man affirmed having served as a door-watch in the pretorium of Jerusalem during Jesus' trial and having slapped him on his departure towards Golgotha and urging him to hurry there. Jesus condemned him to linger till his coming back. That was why this man lived in this world until those days. He dwelt in both Armenias and dealt with simple people and clergy as well, as he had been baptised. Toward the end of each century the man gets sick but recovers and is rejuvenated, and continues his penalty.

This legend spread around all Europe and became in the 18th century a favourite theme for famous authors. The hero is mostly called Ahasverus. This is perhaps a reminder of the Book of Esther and of its Mesopotamic historic base.

When I learnt from Ahmadiyya sources that the Prophet Isa was given in Islamic tradition the epithet of the "Travelling Prophet" or "Leader of Travellers" I for the first time wondered if the hero of the legend could have had something in common with Jesus' activities in Mesopotamia. They were both Jews and both travelled out of religious motives.

Yet it was difficult to explain the change of favourable qualities of the model into a bad character of the definite product of Christian phantasy. We must not forget that this metamorphosis took place of course in the Christian and not in the Islamic mind. Had the Christian author dared to describe Jesus' travels in the trails of Ahasverus he would have been put on the stake on the spot.

But why did this legend appear in Europe only in the 13th century?

It was not until later that I grasped the impact and extent of the Nestorian Church on the history of Asia and could admire the Mongol Nestorians who tried to take Jerusalem for Christianity in the "Crusade of the yellow" AD. 1259. As a further step I learned more about the sociology of the crusades: not only rich gentry and hierarchy took part in them, but a great burden was put on an immense mass of simple and poor believers. The cruel fight being ended, the individual members of the crusade had opportunity to learn different views about Christ than their own dogmatic ones. Just for the eastern Christian Jesus was more a man than God. For some Christian heretics he was only a man. Following the Kinitic creed he was their progeny and had some share in Judas' suicide. In Islam he was a man, a Prophet and a forerunner of Muhammad. The crusaders learnt from Christian heretics of more different aspects of this wonderful character. It is plain that the humiliating traits and stains had to be shifted from Jesus on to a scape-goat. In the medieval Europe naturally and only on to a Jew.

This is why the "travelling Jew", originally being the travelling prophet Isa. appeared in Europe with the end of the crusades.

IV

The last point of my paper concerns the relation of Jesus to Buddhism. A certain similarity between the Christian and the Buddhfr,t movements and later churches was striking the Christian missionaries and tradesmen who came from Europe to India like Marco Polo. More striking was the liturgy and ritual than the dogma. One must not forget that the original teaching of Gautama was not a religion, but an attempt to find the solution of the philosophical question how to avoid suffering.

It is hardly probable that the similarity would be a mere chance.

The opinion of Seydel that it was only Christianity that learnt from Buddhism and not also vice-versa is to be rejected. How could it be, if Buddha's teaching tends to suppress any desire and longed for the nirvana, whilst the teaching of Jesus came that his sheep should have a life and have it more abundantly? John 10:10.

Buddha cared little for religious questions. Jesus on the contrary having fully accepted the creed of his fathers fought for its pure humanity against Jewish clergy and the Pharisees.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Mov,ement in Islam and his co-workers collected facts about Jesus' journey to Kashmir. The archaeologist Prof. Kh. Hasnain enlarged them. These tell us, and I accept it, that Jesus may have reached India at an age of about 60 years.

He lived under the name of Yuz Asaf in Kashmir and preached also in the neighbouring regions following the opinion of P. J. Nehru. He ascertained in this tolerant atmosphere of the futility and selfishness of the monopolistic Jewish claim of world salvation "only through the Jews". He felt being bound to preach "to all nations" without any difference (Mat. 28:19). He might have preached mostly to simple people but when opportunity offered he discussed moral and religious matters with scholars of all creeds.

The situation in Kashmir was favourable for the realization of his ultimate plan: renewing his effort to institute the kingdom of God on earth. The Kashmir kingdom was situated in the centre of the vast Jndoscythian empire founded by Kadfises I and governed then by an equally successful warrior and statesman Kanishka the First. It was the centre of the Gandhara Indo-Hellenistic culture, and was equipped even with a wellknown university at Taxila.

Being a good statesman, Kanishka longed for a common moral bond for the many nations ruled by him. He sought therefore information from Buddhist monks. But he did not like the differences of views of the many monks he invited to him. On the advice of the philosopher Parshwa he invited fifteen hundred Buddhist scholars to a council in Kashmir. It was the fourth one by the Mahayanan counting.

The king was so pleased with the outcome of its discussions that he paid great homage to the participants on its conclusion and then performed an unusual political deed: He handed over the complete administration of the kingdom of Kashmir to the co-operative sangha of Buddhist monks whose leader was the wise philosopher Nagardjuna.

What made him act like this? He might have been impressed by such a tolerant and democratic managing of the council and of its prompt solution of the problem how to unify the teaching of so many Buddhist sects.

But whence came the idea to hand over even the civil administration i.e. the political one, to a religious order? In this respect Buddha's view was quite apposite: He left his throne and family to be able to meditate in solitude. In Kosala he pondered on the question whether it was possible for a king to perform his duties with absolute justice. His solution is apparent from the fact, that, invited to take once more his own throne, he declined. No wish for power or dominance. His direction for his monks was also clear: When you enter a community to beg for your food, behave like a bee: Take your nectar from the bloom but do not harm its shape. colour or scent! Well, do not mingle with politics.

If not the Buddhist monks who then brought the idea of an ecclesiastical ruling of a kingdom to king Kanishka?

Was not it perhaps a man knowing the order of Jahwe: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation! 2M. 19, 6? Was it not the man who had made an unsuccessful attempt to realize this in Palestine? A man who got by subjective and objective ways of perception a deep knowledge of the unlike effects of different ways of ruling and of different rulers.

Possibly was it the man who forged for his disciples the basic instruction of ruling in Luke 22:25 :

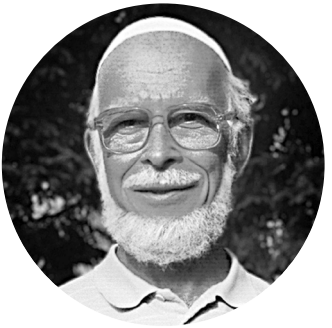
> "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them . . . but ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that serves."

Did not Jesus recognise in Ashoka his own conception of the ruling business?

Was it the preacher of the "sower" in Kashmir, Yuz Asaf, who not only discussed the hinayanama teaching with Buddhists eager to acquire higher merits than having no desires, but to deserve them by self-sacrifice?

Was not this a man who had the right to see this unique opportunity as a reward from his Lord for hardships suffered under the burden of his service of Love?

Is it possible to doubt then, that this tum-over in Buddhism i.e. from the ascetic and selfish teaching of *hinayanama* to that of mahayanama, to this "Renaissance of Buddhism", or as the Czech indologue V. Lesny has put it, to the "Messianic Buddhism," was catalyzed by Yuz Asaf and that it crystalized in Jesus' inspiring king Kanishka to install the Buddhist rule in Kashmir. Certainly this was a "kingdom of God" for Jesus.



Did Jesus Die on the Cross?
written by MISS ANNA M. TOLANO
read by SVEND HANSEN of Denmark

HUGO TOLL, chief physician at the Deaconess Institute Ersta, Sweden, born 1858, died 1943, made a detailed study of the question of whether Jesus actually died on the cross, in his book "Dog Jesus pa korset?" ("Did Jesus Die on the Cross?") (Wahlstrom & Widstrand, two editions, 1928).

Toll attempts to present the extensive research on the life of Jesus which followed the critical break-through of biblical history during the 19th century. He also makes an attempt to enter the discussions on the reliability of the four Gospels as testimony, but considers himself unable to take a definite stand for or against the essentially contradictory opinions on this subject held by theologians of different schools. He finds it justifiable, rather, to base his opinions on all four of them, as they appear in the new Swedish translation, as in his view (and also it seems in that

of modem theological and historical authorities) there are many probable reasons for assuming that most of the facts presented in the Gospels concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus are essentially reliable. He gains support from the works of Bousset, Harnack and Fries. Toll is not blind to the contradictions between the Gospels, but he regards these rather as evidence, if only indirect, of the authenticity of the accounts. It is clear, he says, that at least there is no conspiracy in the presentation. And he continues: To prove beyond doubt the correctness of the given facts is naturally impossible in most cases, and any conclusions based upon them will therefore always be uncertain. But when there is nothing to contradict a related fact, then arguments of probability have to prevail. The accounts are simple and ingenuous and show no signs at all of being "improved." And clearly there was no need to invent incidents. The ones at hand were sufficiently full of significance to form a basis for the faith of the disciples - which for the world of that time was highly explicable, but which now seems fantastic. Just as we can well understand now bow the first Christians could draw their conclusions from the related events, so do we at present do nothing more than to make a different interpretation, and draw other conclusions from the same premises.

Toll then makes a reconstruction of the violence to which Jesus was subjected, to his scourge and crucifixion, supported by available information on the procedures used by the Romans in these forms of punishment, and on the nature of the cross, etc. He claims that the wounds and other injuries inflicted on the victims would not necessarily cause death. According to Eusebius, who had occasion to make observations on such violence during Diocletian persecutions, it was usual in crucifixion for death not to occur until several days later, resulting from exhaustion, hunger,

or attacks by birds of prey or other wild animals (cited after Hase: Geschichte Jesu). The thieves who were cnicified together with Jesus had to be clubbed to death so that the execution could be completed and the bodies taken down from the cross before the Sabbath eve.

In the case of Jesus, on the other hand, the mental and physical shock resulted after only six hours in fainting and a state of deep unconsciousness which was difficult to distinguish from death.

That Jesus was still alive when the soldier speared his side is, according to Toll, incontestable, as blood flowed from the wound, which would not happen after death. The "water" that ran out, according to the narrative, is interpreted by Toll as a discharge of lymph, which had been formed under the skin through the scourging, and he supposes that the soldier, when he walked past the cross, from pure mischief made a small superficial stab in one of these water-blisters, which he couldn't leave alone. Thus according to Toll it need not be assumed that the spear wound was deep and of any significance for the question of life or death.

In a separate chapter Toll gives an account of medicoscientific aspects of life and death, fainting and "apparent death", and goes on to a discussion of the refutations of the hypotheses of apparent death concerning the death of Jesus, which time and again have appeared in the literature. He pays special attention to the criticisms of the view that Jesus did not die on the cross put forward by Hase (Geschichte Jesu, 1872). Weiss (Das Leben Jesu, 1882) and Delff (Grundziige der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Religion, 1886), in particular, and points out on what weak grounds their "counter-evidence" is based. Toll states that to judge from the Gospels Jesus was not anointed; if this had been testified, the hypothesis of apparent death would of course have

lacked all foundation from the start.

If one accepts that Jesus was only apparently dead when he was placed in the tomb, then according to Toll the subsequent events would have their natural explanation: Jesus awoke to life, the stone that had been placed against the entrance to the tomb was thrown aside by an earthquake or was perhaps forced away from the inside by Jesus himself. And in his white linen cloth, sitting on the stone, he gave the women who came to the tomb on Easter morning the vision of an angel.

Of great interest is Toll's comment that the difficulty in reconciling the accounts of Jesus's journeyings (Emmaus etc.) on the same day that he left the tomb, in the condition which his feet must have be.en in after the nailing on the cross, can be eliminated if the fact is considered that in some places in the Gospel of St. John (chapter 20, verses 20 and 25) only wounds in the side and in the hands are mentioned. Toll made a thorough study of the literature concerning the technique of crucifixion and considered that in the secular literature he found good support for the possibility, or even probability, that the feet were left untouched by the nailing.

This is an extract from "Korset och Graven. En nutida lakares tankar om Jesu dod och uppstandelse" ("The Cross and the Tomb. Viewpoints of a present-day physician on the Death and Resurrection of Jesus") by Gunnar Nystrom, M.D., former Professor of Surgery at Uppsala University, Sweden. Published 1950, Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri AB, Uppsala.

Resolution

At the International Conference on the DELIVERANCE OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS held in London on June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th 1978, and attended by people from all over the world, the delegates unanimously adopted the following resolution:

WE THE DELEGATES to the International Conference on DELIVERANCE OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS, request the Government of Kashmir to confer the status of a historic religious monument on RAUZA-BAL situated at the Khanyar Street, Srinagar, Kashmir, which the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam believe is the Tomb of a righteous prophet of God, Jesus of Nazareth. We also request that adequate provision be made for its regular upkeep and maintenance and request that the needed repairs and restoration work be urgently undertaken to restore the Tomb to a desired state of preservation.

A copy of this resolution may be transmitted to the Secretary of the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation with the request to provide the authorities in India all necessary help in this connection.

ON BEHALF OF ALL TIIE DELEGATES,

Vote of Thanks
by B. A. RAFIQ

My Most Beloved,

Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen,

Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of the Ahmadiyya Community of United Kingdom, it is my honour and privilege to propose a sincere vote of thanks to our most beloved leader, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III for having blessed this conference with his exalted presence and to thank him for his learned and inspiring address in the concluding session of the International Conference on the Deliverance of Jesus From the Cross. The publicity accorded to and the keen interest aroused by the Conference, could not have been achieved without the guidance and prayers of our beloved leader. We are indeed greatly beholden to him and shall always cherish the memory of his uniform graciousness extended to us all throughout.

It is also my proud duty to convey to him the pledge of firm loyalty and complete devotion of every member of the Movement in this country and to affirm our perpetual faith in Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

Ladies and Gentlemen! On behalf of all those present here today and those who have been fortunate enough to attend the previous sessions of this conference, may I also thank the several speakers for their highly instructive, well-conceived and thought-provoking discourses. I am confident that between them they

have stimulated the minds of millions of people in this country and throughout the world, and incited them to probe deeply into the mystery surrounding one of the world's great prophets, Jesus, on whom be peace. We trust that the series of conjectures and ill-founded speculations concerning the life and death of Jesus will now be replaced by a more rational understanding of the true events of his life. We pray to God Almighty that He may be pleased to open the hearts of men and women everywhere to the appreciation and acceptance of truth. Amen!

Ladies and Gentlemen! No conference can be held without participants. On behalf of the London Mosque, I thank all honourable guests and the hundreds of delegates from all over the world who have participated in this conference and thus helped to make it an outstanding success. Please remember that although this conference ends today, all of us at the London Mosque shall always be available to assist you by answering any queries that you may address to us. Should you require any additional information, please feel free to call on us at any time.

My thanks also go to our zealous team of volunteers, some of whom have worked round the clock, to ensure that our guests should not experience any discomfort or inconvenience. The only reward they seek are your kind prayers.

We are profoundly grateful to the authorities and staff of the Commonwealth Institute for their eager co-operation and the uniform courtesy and helpfulness they have extended to us and our guests.

Ladies and gentlemen! Thank you all very much.

Christian Churches ask for Talks with Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam
The reply of
KHALIFATUL MASIH III

A three-day international conference, bringing together archaeologists, scholars,, orientalists and theologians from all over the world, was held in June, 1978 at the Commonwealth Institute, London. The subject of the conference was "The Deliverance Of Jesus From The Cross".

The conference attracted world-wide attention. There were many interviews on radio and television.

The international news services sent out reports to newspapers throughout the world and articles were published in many countries. The news of this conference was obviously of great interest to people everywhere but especially to Christians.

The head of the Catholic Church in Britain Cardinal Hume, announced that he was sending an observer to the conference. The Catholic Church in Poland sent two representatives. Many Bishops of the Anglican Church sent greetings of goodwill and said they would be praying for it.

Five days before the conference opened, a statement was issued on behalf of the British Council of Churches. The British Council is an Associated Council of the World Council of Churches, which is the world organisation of Christian Protestant Churches.

The statement said that the British Council of Churches looked forward to conversations in the future between Muslims of the Ahmadiyya Movement and Christians for a mutual sharing of convictions of God's compassionate and merciful nature and on questions relating to the significance of Jesus.

The response of the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement Khalifatul Masih III, was both immediate and gracious. At the end of his address to the conference he told the 1,500 delegates and guests, crowding the central halls of the Commonwealth Institute, that he accepted this invitation and that the talks would be held in an atmosphere of love and courtesy.

He also suggested that these talks be held in five different places, London, Rome, the capital of a West African country, the capital of a country in Asia and also in the United States of America.

The Khalifatul Masih also declared that he would welcome similar talks with the Catholic Church.

It is thus evident that the search for the truth about Jesus is bringing all mankind closer together.

This is a victory for the One True God.

Imam B. A. Rafiq

This is what Khalifatul Masih III said:

The newly-formed British Council of Churches' Committee For Relationships With People Of Other Faiths has issued a statement with reference to the *International Conference of the Ahmadiyya Movement on The Deliverence of Jesus from the Cross* in which it affirms its readiness to open a constructive dialogue with, among others, representatives of the Ahmadiyya Movement. The statement expresses apprehension that the publicity given to the Conference "may ... cause offence". I desire to announce that in holding the Conference the Ahmadiyya Movement has meant no offence and none should be taken. Throughout the Conference, Jesus, in whom we believe as a righteous prophet and true messenger of God, was referred to in terms of the deepest respect and reverence.

The statement points out that there are doctrinal differences between the Ahmadiyya Movement and orthodox Islamic authorities. I wish to make it clear that all Islamic sects, despite their differences, are united on the Unity of God, the righteousness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace and blessings of God and on his being the Seal of the Prophets and the most exalted of them all. On the question of the Unity of God and the doctrine of Trinity there is no difference whatever between us.

It is further affirmed in the statement: Our reluctance to make public comment on the London Conference also stems from our awareness that Christianity has often indulged in aggressive and negative attacks on the central tenets of other religions. attacks of a sort comparable to these Ahmadiyya attacks on the central

Christian tenet. While we agree that Christianity has often indulged in aggressive and negative attacks on the central tenets of other religions in language which was open to serious objection, we cannot agree that the belief of the Ahmadiyya Movement and its publication through a conference, or otherwise, that Jesus was an exalted divine messenger and that nothing should be attributed to him which should be inconsistent with his high status as a divine messenger, is an aggressive or negative attack.

The recognition by the Committee that "the death of Jesus Christ on the cross may seem a scandal and an affront to divine justice" is a welcome announcement. This raises the hope that if the reality of these questions is expounded to our Christian brethren with love and true understanding they will give up their wrong tenets and will recognize that the belief that Jesus died an accursed death on the cross and that an innocent one was punished for the sins of the guilty would not only "seem" but would truly be a scandal and an affront to divine justice.

We are happy that the British Council of Churches, through this Committee, has invited the Ahmadiyya Movement to conversations in the future in London and elsewhere on the difference between us.

We accept this invitation and desire that these conversations should be held in an atmosphere of love and courtesy. We propose that these conversations should be held in London, Rome, a West African capital, an Asian capital and in the United States of America, on dates and conditions to be agreed upon between the parties.

We would also welcome opportunities of dialogue with the representatives of the Catholic Church on the doctrinal

differences between us, either separately or in combination with other Christian Churches, including the British Council of Churches.

The Statement, issued by the British Council of Churches'

Committee for Relationships With People Of Other Faiths, said:

We note that the Ahmadiyya Muslim movement in Britain has organised a conference in London from 2nd to 4th June, on the theme 'Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross'. We read that topics to be discussed, at the Conference centre round one of the principal tenets of the 89-year-old Ahmadiyya Movement, that Jesus was taken down from the Cross by his disciples, and after recovering from his wounds travelled secretly to Iran, Afghanistan and Kashmir, eventually dying a natural death in Kashmir, and being buried in a tomb still to be found in Srinagar today. We recall that the Ahmadiyya Movement came into existence in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, in the Eastern Punjab region of the Indian sub-continent, and that the movement began as a result of the preaching and activities of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

We are reluctant to make any public comment on the London conference. Orthodox Islamic authorities have for a long time repudiated as non-Quranic the Ahmadiyya claim that Jesus died a natural death after going to Kashmir: orthodox Muslims in London should therefore perhaps be the ones to do any necessary commenting on this London conference and its theme. Our reluctance also stems from our awareness that Christianity has often indulged in aggressive and negative attacks on the central tenets of other religions, attacks of a sort comparable to these Ahmadiyya attacks on the central Christian tenet: we do not wish

to appear over-defensive when such attacks are directed at us.

However, in view of the publicity given to this conference in a way calculated to stir up controversy, we feel bound to make three comments:

1. We re-affirm our belief in the historicity of the crucifixion and death of Jesus which is attested by the four gospels and by the unanimous testimony of early Christian tradition: we recognize that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross may seem a scandal and an affront to divine justice, but we believe that in the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross we see the love of God which suffers on behalf of others and which does not forgive without a cost:

2. We look forward to conversations in the future (in an unpublicised setting) between Muslims of the Ahmadiyya Movement and Christians, in London and elsewhere, for a mutual sharing of convictions on the meaning of God's compassionate and merciful nature, and on questions relating to the significance of Jesus:

3. Although we do not agree that there is firm evidence for any visit by Jesus to Central Asia or the Indian sub-continent, we fully accept the fact that the figure of Jesus, whom we believe to be the living Christ, belongs to all nations and countries, and that all links between the Chris.tian movement and different cultures in the early centuries should be taken seriously and explored.

Pictorial of the conference

Pictures of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh] from the conference

A group picture taken with
Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh]
at the conference

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh]
during his address

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh]
addressing the audience

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih III[rh]
during his lecture

Miscellaneous pictures of the conference

WELCOME
TO THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON THE
DELIVERANCE OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS
COMMONWEALTH

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